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Marvel Vision #19 July 1997

Timothy Tuohy
Is the lost McKenzie brother

Julio Soto
Who? Eh?

Chris Carroll, James DeSimone
Brent Ferguson, Jeanne Geier
Michel Lé & Mel Sanchez
Think Canada is the Great White South

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Suzanne Paquin
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John Stack
Drives in Canada

Bob Harras
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Jim (Ski) Sokolowski
Where's Canada?

Shirrel Rhoades
Thinks black clothes look good in Canada

David J. Schreff
Wants Tim to stop writing these credits

Scott Sassa
Wants David to stop Tim from
writing these credits

Because of a printing problem, last issue's editorial printed in black and white instead of color. It is presented as it should have looked on page 9. Rip it out and glue it on top of last month's.

I love Alpha Flight. No. I really, really love Alpha Flight.

I was just getting into comics so I just missed their first appearance in the pages of UNCANNY X-MEN #s 120 and 121. I was a full-fledged X-Men nut by the time Shaman, Snowbird and Vindicator, as Guardian was called then, made guest appearances in UNCANNY #s 139 and 140. After reading those issues I just had to raid the back issue bins to find their first appearance. I got them and eventually got Vindicator's first showing in X-MEN #109 (it hadn't yet been tagged with the "Uncanny" prefix).

This group of Canadian super heroes really caught my interest. From the pages of the X-MEN they went on to get their own series. I remember vividly the day I first met John Byrne at a convention. I handed him a copy of X-MEN #108, his first, to autograph, but all I wanted to ask him was about the new ALPHA FLIGHT book that he was going to be writing and penciling. He satisfied all my wishes by telling me and the surrounding crowd of onlookers all his plans.

He, of course, moved on, leaving the book for others to play with, and I followed their adventures as eagerly as before. Does anyone remember that both Mike Mignola and Jim Lee both worked on Alpha in their early days in comics? I do!

When I found out that Marvel was going to be doing an all-new ALPHA book I became that kid from 1982 all over again. From Sasquatch's cameo in DEADPOOL #1 to all the early art I've seen, I think Marvel's got a winner on its hands. Steven Seagle is a great writer and artist Scott Clark is simply amazing. The Great White North has a team to be reckoned with.

Not to be outdone by the Canadians, THUNDERBOLTS continues to amaze me. Issue #2 was awesome. Now that we the readers know who the 'Bolts really are, what more does Kurt Busiek have in store for us? Read on, True Believer.

There are even more great things to be found inside this issue so dive on in.

Finally, It was my great pleasure to return a favor that Marvel gave to me almost six years ago. If you remember, in issue #12 there was an article about a day in the life of a Marvel intern. The article was written by the young and idealistic Julio Soto. Well, like 6 years ago when I was hired from the ranks of Marvel interns, I was able to hire Julio as an assistant editor. He will be giving myself and Marvel's own Cyber-Queen Suzanne Beason some much needed help. Welcome aboard, Julio.

G'Day, eh?
I'm done.

Tim Tuohy

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INSIGHTS

Well, VISION has had its share of controversies since it began, what with my spelling errors and such, but nothing could've prepared the VISION office for the avalanche of mail and e-mail, regarding what we could only call: "The Tim Tuohy Never Watched Fat Albert as a Kid" scandal!

The letters came in fast and furious after I awarded what I thought was a valid No-Prize to Bill Meechan. Boy, was I wrong and you let me know it in no uncertain terms.

Dear INSIGHTS,

In regards to your No- Prize winner, Bill Meechan (Issue #15), he does not deserve it. This is because the true answer is **Dumb Donald** of Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids.

A true fan of animation would know that, especially someone at INSIGHTS. Please make sure your No-Prize winners give the correct answers.

Jeff Ananson
33 Highview Ave.
Bernardsville, NJ 07924

Dear INSIGHTS

Concerning the name of the Fat Albert character in the letter column of MARVEL VISION #15, you awarded Bill Meechan a No-Prize for the wrong answer. The correct name of the pictured "Cosby Kid" with the hat over the top half of his head is **Dumb Donald**. No character called Weird Ronald exists, although there was a Weird Harold. Check out any video or Cosby/animation fan to see that I'm correct. I do hope my No-Prize is autographed by Stan.

pb11864@www.cedarnet.org
Mike Blanchard
PO Box 133
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Dear VISION

Ok, I know this doesn't have much to do with Marvel VISION, but I wanna try to clear up this whole Fat Albert fiasco.

The characters are Fat Albert, Weird Harold (kid with long head), Mushmouth (buckteeth and talks really funny), Rudy (kid with flat head), Russell (youngest one and shortest), and **Dumb Donald** (the one with the pink ski mask thing). If there were any other "Cosby Kids", then I'm at a loss....

Chris "Longshot" Dickinson
Longshot@prodigy.net

Dear VISION,

I didn't know Marvel gave out No-Prizes for incorrect answers. In Marvel VISION # 15, someone wrote in claiming that the Fat Albert & the Cosby Kids' character with the pink knit hat pulled down over his eyes was named Weird Ronald. Actually, his name was **Dumb Donald.** The reader must've confused him with another character on the show named Weird Harold. Just thought I'd share.

Sekhmet 7@aol.com
David Hahn

Dear Tim,

Thank you for printing my letter in issue #17.

The characters in the Fat Albert cartoon are: Fat Albert, Bill (white shirt), his brother Russell ("Hi, teacher out of work!), Rudy ("No class!"), Weird Harold (brown jacket), Bucky (his teeth), Mushmouth (red ski hat), and... **Dumb Donald** (lavender ski mask, high pitched voice).

Fat Albert, Bill, and Mushmouth were voiced by Bill Cosby. Dumb Donald was voiced by Lou Scheimer.

There were three prime-time Fat Albert specials: the Christmas one where Fat Albert and the gang helped a lost boy and his family, the Halloween one where Russell and the kid sister of a friend visit an old lady, who is in fact a kind and generous person. The last dealt with Rudy playing a prank by putting grease on a ladder. Unfortunately, Old Man Mumford is the one who slips on the ladder. For once, Russell is the one who wants to take Rudy apart.

Songs included "Don't Go Telling a Lie!" and "TV Or Not TV!"

Memorable episodes dealt with the death of loved ones (Uncle Monty), Alcoholism, and children of interracial marriages.

In the last season of Fat Albert, the gang would watch "The Brown Hornet and his pal, Stinger!" My personal favorite was the story of Hi-Lo, an alien of mixed parentage who could alter the pitch of his voice.

I realize that the discussion is over on this one, but for me, the show has some very special significance and precious childhood memories.

The fact that Fat Albert and The Cosby Kids could produce such beautiful music with those instruments from a junkyard amazed me at age 7 in 1975... and still continues to do so in 1997 at age 28.

As far as getting a definite answer, I'd ask Kurt Busiek and Alex Ross, since Fat Albert and The Cosby Kids made an appearance in KINGDOM COME #1 (they were apprehended by the Bat-Robots in Gotham)!

Thank for your time and please continue to produce this fine fan magazine.

Steve Chung
741 Masson Ave #3
San Bruno, CA 94066
fanboy@vidgame.com (FANBOY)

Dear INSIGHTS,

...in issue #15 there was a NO-PRIZE awarded to Bill Meechan for correctly naming the Fat Albert characters with the hat pulled down over his eyes. This character was said to be called Weird Ronald. But I have a tag from a T-shirt I recently bought and this character was named Dumb Donald. Which one of us is right? Weird Ronald or Dumb Donald? If I'm right, do I win a NO-PRIZE too? By the way, what the heck is a NO-PRIZE anyway?

James Williams
128 W. Lexington
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901

Dear Tim,

BELIEVE me. The picture is correct, but the name is WEIRD HAROLD. I used to watch Fat Albert all the time.

Hoffhammer@aol.com

Well, far be it from me not to admit my mistake but I goofed. James Williams provided something just as good as a call from Bill Cosby himself. He sent in a tag from a Fat Albert licensed T-shirt. On the back was a list of all the characters from the show which is where this picture came from. Thanks James.

I'll be going back and looking at the letters pages and will award posthumous No-Prizes to all those who identified Dumb Donald correctly.

Let's still give Bill Meechan a round of applause for trying and sorry, Hoffhammer, you still didn't get it.

Dear INSIGHTS,

One of the best things to come out of Marvel in years is VISION. I love the coverage, interviews, designs, letters page, and editorial direction you have given the magazine.

Though some of the articles and interviews could have been more in-depth, I feel that you

are generally on the right track with VISION.

I am willing to express my thoughts about something that has bugged me about Marvel, and I guess VISION is the best place to air those views.

It seems like the days of Marvel being "one" with the fans are becoming increasingly rare. I say this because the letter pages are shoddily put together with a lack of personal touch and they seem to have lost the feel that letters pages of the past had.

A perfect example would be a recent EXCALIBUR letter page where an assistant editor actually pointed out that they were unable to print a certain issue's fan letters because they had lost all the mail. How could that happen? In other comics, letters pages appear as often as a blue moon. I have not seen a letter column in any of the Heroes Reborn comics. (With the exception of one pathetic excuse for one in FF.) I would've guessed that the books would have received a huge response and I do not think that the lack of letters pages is due to a lack of letters.

I would like to point Marvel in the direction of DC and some of the Image titles, where authors and editors are the ones who actually answer fans' letters. Take a look at STARMAN, BATMAN, ASTRO CITY, and SAVAGE DRAGON and you'll know what I mean.

However, on Marvel's part, the best letter column I can think of is where it should be, in VISION. There are others who do a great job as well. UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN, with assistant editor Glenn Greenberg's regular editorials. THE INCREDIBLE HULK has some of the most interesting letters and replies ever. Marvel should take a cue from Mark Gruenwald's letters columns of old, where the column became not just a forum for readers, but also for creators with Mark's Remarks, the Question of the Month and the Special Announcements sections. As Marvel expands its letters columns to a double page spread in the 40-page comics, I would like to see that happening. A fun and useful letters page that genuinely makes reading worthwhile.

I think that you believe in your readers, Tim. For if not, you would not have the best letters page in Marvel. So let's see your fellow editors follow your lead in giving their readers their day in court.

Congratulations on a job well done. I'll be rooting for you, kid.

Cheers!
Leslie Lee
Singapore

Thanks for the complement, Leslie. Like I said in last issue's letters page, it does take a lot of work doing this letters page. I've had some months where ninety letters came in and I read everyone of them and did my best to print the names and addresses of those who didn't get their letter printed. Why do I do this? It's quite simple, really. If you can plunk down your hard earned money for VISION then I should give the readers the same courtesy and give them a letters page worth reading.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I just finished reading AVENGERS #5, which featured the most savage battle ever between the Hulk and Thor. Now I want to say that throughout the whole story, I was rooting for the Hulk to pound the living daylights out of Thor and that's exactly what happened. I've never liked the God of Thunder because he's rude, arrogant, and self-centered, and he's a person who often talks to others as if they were beneath him. It was a great pleasure for me to see the green Goliath win the battle and show the world what real strength is all about. HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!!! And I wouldn't have it any other way.

Robert Moraes
10214 E. Stoney Vista Dr.
Sun Lakes, AZ 85248

Hulk fans all over loved the trouncing the green goliath gave the God of Thunder. But don't count Thor out just yet. I'm sure he'll get his revenge in time.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I have read and loved Marvel Comics since I was a little kid. And I love this magazine. But something is missing. Artwork from the fans. You should have a section in the magazine where people can send in their own characters and ideas. So think about it. I would like to send you some of my artwork.

I really like Joe Madureira and Steve Skroce. I really dig their style and hope to be as good [one day]. I've always dreamt of working for Marvel. Next year I plan to go to an art school in Chicago. So, in a couple of years when I get out I plan on making it big. So look out for me. I'll be there soon.

Carlos Solano
1605 Woodridge
Round Lake Beach, IL 60073

It was my dream as well to work for Marvel when I was your age, Carlos. I always wanted to be an inker and I even got the chance to do some inking on Marvel books. Jim Krueger is even going to embarrass me by putting some of my work in a Greatest Comics Never Seen installment. Bob Harras said I should be putting it in Silliest Moments. What a guy that Bob.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I've just come from the Pittsburgh Comic-Con Fall Spectacular, and I must say I had a ball. My senses were on overload, there was so much to see. The artists were all very nice and many were kind enough to do a quick sketch for me. I didn't see any Marvel artists, but there were several DC fellows and quite a few independent guys as well. I met the like of Scott McDaniel, Dan Parsons, Val Semeiks, and Michael Bair.

When I started to visit with all of the dealers, I knew I was in heaven. I was surrounded by back issues of Marvel comics. Now, at this point, I must tell you that I have been reading comics since 1974, so I've been around for awhile. It is with a heavy heart that I must utter this next statement, but it must be said: In my opinion, today's Marvel comics cannot hold a candle to Marvel's books of yesteryear. Books like THE DEFENDERS, THE INVADERS, ALPHA FLIGHT, WEST COAST AVENGERS, and DR. STRANGE. Do you notice that not one of these books has an "X" or a "SPIDER" in it? Whatever happened to the House of Ideas? Where has it gone and will it ever be back? Marvel has a stable of 10,000 characters and yet 95% of them are never used. I long to see Marvel icons, such as Northstar, Tigra, Quasar, Wasp, Aurora, Valkyrie, Cloud, just to name a few. Please don't leave these greats in Marvel Limbo.

I suppose that if you do decide to continue to publish only X and Spider books, I'll always have the back issue bins. Now don't get me wrong, I like some of your current books, and I do buy them on a monthly basis. I get several X-Books, and a couple of Spider-Titles regularly and I enjoy them immensely. I'm just saying that I don't believe we need 10 X-Titles and six Spider-Titles. You have a huge library of characters...use them.

I realize that this is a rather negative letter, but I meant it as constructive criticism only. I am now and always will be a Marvel Zombie. I'll stand by you no matter what. I've been with you for 23 years, I'm not about to jump ship now! But, I will be frequenting the back issue bins for my classic Marvel character fix.

Rick Blair
RR #1 Box 363-B
Georgetown Rd.
Franklin, PA 16323

I am a huge fan of old Marvel books and would like to see some of those books you mention come back. While they all won't, there are plans for a few and a definite for one, namely ALPHA FLIGHT.

Sometimes it might seem like we put out too many Spider and X books but we really feel and stand behind the stories that are presented in those books. While they might not be for everyone, to deny those who want them would be wrong.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I have spent the past year trying to find the issues of GARGOYLES that I don't have. From #12 on up. When I gave up in despair, I asked someone at my local comic shop, what happened to my favorite series?

He told me that Disney had to cancel it because Marvel was doing the book incorrectly. I was very angry. I was angry that Marvel was a big disappointment to Disney. I was angry that Disney wouldn't give Marvel a second chance. I was also angry that I couldn't find GARGOYLES issues #12 and up.

Please tell me what the true story is. Please tell me where I can find the missing issue of GARGOYLES.

Peter Stockman
(Address Withheld Upon Request

Well, the story isn't really like that. What happens is that with any licensed property such as Gargoyles, Marvel must pay a fee to the company that owns the characters. This is to allow Marvel to publish books using another companies' material. Marvel was doing a fine job with GARGOYLES. I read it and liked it as much as I do the show; however sales were not behind the book. With low sales and the fee that Marvel had to pay, it wasn't a profitable venture for either company so the book was canceled.

As far as your missing issues, keep trying your local comic shop; ask the owner if he can obtain those issues from another store. Keep trying and you'll get them someway.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I really liked your Star Trek article in the February issue of VISION by Matt Morra. Morra mentioned that there's a whole wealth of good Star Trek stories out there. May I suggest two? How about a special STAR TREK issue about the S. S. Valiant? According to the Star Trek Encyclopedia the Valiant was the interstellar vessel in 2064 that was destroyed by its Captain after one of his crew members mutated into a God-like being. This was mentioned in Where No Man Has Gone Before.

Also, how about a special issue about Zefram Cochrane, journeying to Alpha Centauri? I think this one would be great, coming after *Star Trek: First Contact*.

Both stories would be about the early years of Star Trek history, which I think Trek fans will be interested in.

Please can we have more articles in VISION about Star Trek? Thanks!

Michael R. Stolze
17630 Corpiutero Ave. Apt. #29
Bellflower, CA 90706

P. S.

The STAR TREK/X-MEN crossover was great! Are there any more Star Trek crossovers planned for the near future?

If you've been out of the solar system lately then you might've missed the news...I'm now also the editor of STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE, VOYAGER and UNLIMITED! Does that mean there will be some more Trek coverage in future issues of VISION? You bet! In fact next month sounds pretty good.

More Trek crossovers? Stay tuned.

Dear INSIGHTS,

Your magazine is so cool. You have everything that any fan would ever hope for. Marvel VISION is the finest magazine in a long time that focuses only on Marvel Comics, which are the only ones I read. Time Slip is by far my favorite regular department and I believe you guys should make a monthly series out of it in the What If? style.

The main reason that I first picked up Marvel VISION was to see what comics were coming out and what they were all about. This alone is good enough for the $1.50 I pay for VISION. Next, you guys have pure Marvel articles, no DC articles, no Image articles, etc. This is a true Marvel fan magazine as your cover blurts out.

The Beast Files are pretty neat, but I think you should do one on the following characters: Spider-Man, Havok, and X-Factor. When are you going to make MARVEL CHRONICLES monthly? It is an excellent department. Why don't you add an ongoing comic to your magazine that will spread through many issues?

That's about all I have to say for now.

Ryan Solski
67 Mikado Cr.
Brampton, Ontario
Canada L6S 3R5

Thanks for being a VISION Zombie, Ryan. I like to think that there's enough going on at the House Of Ideas to warrant a monthly book dedicated to just Marvel. Whether it be comics, movies, video games or books, there's a lot going on here.

And by the way, we did a Spider-Man Beast Files in issue #15. Check it out.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I've been reading Marvel INSIGHTS for awhile now, and some of the letters I read are just plain not right. O. K. , let me explain. A lot of people have been writing in complaining that their favorite Marvel title was canceled or blaming other titles for the downfall of the one they are so fond of. The X-titles have been catching a lot of heat from these people. They claim that Marvel's artists and writers and such are spending too much time on the X-books. Or they ask, why does there have to be so many X-books that they have to cancel my favorite title to keep them all going? Recently I read where someone said that the X-Men are a second string line, and not a flagship group of titles. Excuse me, but what defines a flagship title? One, the amount of revenue produced by the book. Two, the amount of copies sold to fans and dealers. In the case of the UNCANNY X-MEN, and X-MEN, both seem to apply, making them flagship titles. Am I right or am I wrong?

Don't get me wrong, I think that there are too many X-titles on the market. I don't collect all of them, just most of them. But as for a little insight into the cancellation of titles, people can't blame other titles for their favorite one being canceled. Those particular books are canceled because they don't make enough in sales. In other words, not enough fans support the book, so it gets canceled. It's not because of another book's popularity with the fans. I myself have had titles that I loved get canceled. Titles like POWER PACK, THE NEW WARRIORS, NOVA, and others. I did not, however, blame other titles like. AVENGERS or the FANTASTIC FOUR, and I don't think it is right that other fans blame other titles. What do you think on this subject, Tim? As I asked before, am I right or am I wrong?

Matt McIntyre
P. O. Box 644
Clermont, FL 34712-0644

Matt hit the nail right on the head. We would all like our favorite books to go on until we are old and living in Florida; I still wish there was a WEREWOLF BY NIGHT book but I live in the real world. Please don't blame other more successful books for the cancellation of others; that's just not the case. If books do well then all of Marvel as well as the fans benefit. If books do reach a certain point in sales, that being low, then a hard decision has to be made about cancelling it.

A book that I had a deep commitment to was THE 'NAM. That was a book I felt we should have been publishing. When I was given editorial control of the title, sales were hovering around 37,000

copies. That was the deathknell number at the time. I managed to increase sales to around 40,000 but it was too late and the book was gone. It's a fact of life. All I can recommend is, follow your favorite book, write in, tell your friends it's a must read. In the end it's up to all of us to keep our favorites around.

Dear INSIGHTS,

In Marvel VISION #15, the animated episode guide for the UPN Incredible Hulk deserved its inclusion. It's much needed for fans who want to know the credits, air dates, plots, and the history of the series.

Do you think it would be possible to print episode guides to all Hulk video incarnations dating back to 1966?

Why not all episode guides to each and every Marvel super hero television series, live action and animated?

How about a Spider-Man animated series guide from FOX as well as other shows, like Spider-Man 1967, Spidey's Electric Company appearances in 1974. The Amazing Spider-Man 1977-1979, the Japanese Spider-Man 1978, Spider-Man and his Amazing Friends 1981 and the two guest appearances on Spider-Woman 1979 and the Spider-Man syndicated series in 1981?

Thanks for the fun and informative fan magazine. Keep up the good work.

Richard David Irving
32 Cole St.
Pawtucket, RI 02860

I think that with a little prodding, I can get "Reel Marvel" author Andy Mangels to consider those requests. I might have to pull him away from writing his six-month story line for DEEP SPACE NINE but I think we can get it out of him.

Dear INSIGHTS,

Marvel is bankrupt. My stock as well as many others is gone. 115 people have no jobs and are going to suffer for a while. Happy New Year everyone! Seriously though, how are those changes going to affect my weekly dose of Marvel Madness?

Paul Chadwick, creator of the popular Dark Horse character, Concrete, said Marvel would, if they could, sell comics penciled and inked in Indonesian sweatshops (Wizard #66). Normally I would not even listen to such nonsense, but lately it seems more and more true. The suits, the powers that be, the corporate big wigs, whatever you want to call them, seem willing to do anything to make a buck, and that includes compromising comic integrity.

Many people believe Marvel is event driven rather than story driven. When you see things like Waid/Garney's Cap sacrificed to Heroes Reborn it makes you wonder. I am glad that Marvel has had a major turnaround, with comics such as DAREDEVIL, UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN, and GENERATION X. Other comics, ones like UNCANNY X-MEN, SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, and PETER PARKER: SPIDER-MAN seem to have new life.

Now with Marvel broke, things are going to be altered and I hope that the comics do not suffer because of it. New comics like KA-ZAR and the THUNDERBOLTS seem to have potential. They have terrific writers like Mark Waid and Kurt Busiek. They have great artists like Andy Kubert and Mark Bagley. And finally the art complements the story, not the other way around. Now with major changes in store, hope my favorite Marvel comics are not changed to make the quick cash.

And to top off those problems, I hear Marvel may be sold. Since Marvel and Ron Perelman both have financial problems, it seems logical. Sure the industry is hurting, and solid companies like DC are owned by large mega corporations who have nothing to worry about, but Marvel is still in deep doo-doo and may need major help before they can get out. But whatever happens, do not compromise the comics.

A lot of problems stem from people from up on high worrying more about whether they can make money off of the Hulk burping, then they are of seeing that the comics are striving. If the comics sell, the money comes in. And unfortunately, it seems Marvel was more worried about buying up companies then they were about making great comics. I've noticed a major drop in talent coming out of Marvel and books that I normally love I would not give the time of day to anymore.

Flipping through VISION, I look at the Halloween party photos and wonder how many of those people are unemployed. Tim, you may be next!!! I wouldn't be surprised if Marvel starts to hire freelance editors. The focus of Marvel isn't on comics, and that is a major problem. Look at DC: strong stories, new twists, and fan loyalty. Of course that's not saying DC is perfect, and Marvel usually has the same stuff, but DC seems to have more freedom and support from its higher ups. And Image, a company which I both love and despise for reasons of my own, has very strong support for its comics from its superiors. When comics are the emphasis, when you do not forget who you are and what makes you who you are, then you are more than likely to get whatever it is you want.

I know that anyone reading this letter has no or very little power over stuff I mentioned. But since VISION is a Marvel fan magazine and I am a Marvel fan and supporter, this seems like the right place to voice my opinion. I just hope the editors and writers can make due with what they have and flourish. And that the pencilers, inkers, colorists stay loyal to the fans under pressure.

Christopher Vanette
361 Rosemont Drive
State College, PA 16801

Ah, I love a good controversial letter. I've read a lot about the state of Marvel this and that and I find Paul Chadwick's comments [a man whose work I admire, I think CONCRETE is a great book] totally unfair. If that were true, why would we still have incredibly talented people like the Kuberts, Mark Waid, Ron Garney, Carlos Pacheco, Joe Madureira, Tim Townsend, Kurt Busiek...shall I go on...still here?

Does Marvel have financial trouble? Yes. Do all the other comic companies out there have financial concerns? You better believe it! The bottom dropped out of the industry. Why does everyone center their attention on Marvel? Because we are still #1.

Your concern about my welfare is appreciated, Chris. But as a matter of fact, I was laid off on January 4, 1995 and brought back to start VISION in June of that same year. I know what it's like.

Will Marvel survive? Believe it. This kind of downward trend is actually documented in history. Look at the '70s. We'll keep putting out the best comics we can and let all those nay-sayers watch us cook!

Marvel VISION,

I'm excited about the return of Alpha Flight and Heroes for Hire, especially the latter. When will we get some updated information on these two titles? I think Wolverine should join and possibly lead Alpha Flight. I also think that Heroes for Hire would be a great chance to update and relaunch some retro characters such as Moon Knight (could this be why he was featured in the latest issue of Marvel VISION)? If so, take him back to his "Fist of Konshu" days, as this was by far the best rendering of the character.

I'm glad to see this magazine will continue, although I find it hard to believe that there are not others at Marvel interested in keeping it going should your workload become to heavy. If that were to ever become the case, hopefully you would resolicit through Previews rather than leave us out in the cold. Keep up the good work and don't get complacent!!!

Brian K. Hamilton
8018 Regent Park Lane
Charlotte, NC 28210

As I said in my editorial on page 1, I'm very excited about the upcoming ALPHA FLIGHT book. It's going to be a big hit with the fans who appreciated the quirky nature of Canada's famous super team as well as hook new readers.

HEROES FOR HIRE is another book that could take the biz by storm. Will it be a vehicle to relaunch some not-seen-in-a-while characters? I'm not sure.

Was Moon Knight's appearance in The Origin of The Species planned? Not at all. I just really liked the character from his start as a nemesis to Werewolf by Night to his later position as one of Marvel's first "on the edge" heroes when Doug Moench and Bill Sienkiewicz were working on the book.

Dear Insights:

I kind of miss those "silly moments" as mentioned in Marvel VISION #16. Interactions with real world celebrities is fun. Somewhere in my vast collection, I have Avengers #239. That was the most funniest Avengers comic that ever came out. I would love to see the assistant editors at Marvel come up with another "silly moment". Give them another 30 days and see what they can come up with!!

Paul Dale Roberts, Publisher
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Silly Moments gives us all a chance to remember the most important thing about comics: they're fun. I wish more things like what are presented in Silly Moments would happen. Who knows, we might get what we wish for.

Marvel VISION,

I have been a loyal follower of Marvel VISION since you began, and think this is an amazing source of information on Marvel comics. I love it, keep up the good work.

What I wrote/e-mailed to talk about is the current Heroes Reborn, like everyone else, right? Anyway, I love the FF and Iron Man, these are two of the best titles ever produced. The FF is what it's always been meant to be: the brooding Thing, the hot-headed cocky Torch, the lovely, powerful Invisible Woman, and the genius, in-love Mr. Fantastic. And Iron Man is so far ahead of ANY issue of Iron Man since Armor Wars II/Fin Fang Foom it's amazing, sooooo much better than the teenage-Tony slant, what a waste. My vote is to keep the FF and Iron Man separated, but Captain America and the Avengers are in SUCH a major need to get back to the real universe. The only *good* issues done of either of them is the current "Industrial Revolution" storyline. And when Iron Man said, "Off", and killed the power to that shuttle, I was rolling. He's cool. I mean, face it, can the current Cap really compare with the Waid/Garney Captain America? NO, not by a looooooong shot. And you know why? Because the current Cap storyline isn't original. Come on, if you like comics you've seen this story before. Think about it, you'll see it: the greatest hero ever known disappears for an extended period of time, a great danger brings him back, older, fighting to prove he is still what he was, trying to prove it to himself and others, facing one of his greatest enemies back from the past and supposed death, helped along by a young child, a young GIRL child, where the hero had only partnered with a boy before, the grave danger, the victory... Come on, do I need to go on? This Heroes Reborn Captain America is a steal from Frank Miller's "The Dark Knight Returns." And it makes me sick everytime I read one of these issues. The wings instead of the "A" bugs me, and it just doesn't feel like a Captain America book. And that fight in the prison cell stank.

In short, and it's my opinion, no one has to take it, I just wanted to point out the similarities above. The Liefeld books may be selling well, but only because most people believe they'll be collector's issues in the future. And they're probably right, but because of the rarity of the event, not the quality of the work. I tip my hat to you, Jim Lee, your books are wonderful

Nice try, Rob Liefeld, but your art outshines your story. Later on.

Hermit
ctooley@MARSHALL.EDU

What would a VISION letters page be without a HEROES REBORN letter? Incomplete, that's what.

It's getting close to the end of this monumental undertaking and pieces are finally beginning to fit into place. I am forced to agree with you that Jim Lee's books did seem to hit a positive note with a lot of people who read them. But let's not forget that, Rob gave it his best shot, it just wasn't what fans were expecting. In relation to that Rob has decided to leave HEROES REBORN and concentrate more on Maximum Press's endeavors. All of Marvel thanks him for his efforts and wishes him and Maximum all the best.

That's it for this month, Hope you liked the extra page of letters. Keep sending in your letters and e-mails.I stand by my promise to read them all!

Thanks for Writing

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STAN LEE PRESENTS MARVEL VISION
JUNE 1997

"when i grow up, i want to be just like tim... oh... that's him on the shelf."

—Adam Kubert

HULK SMASH!

Timothy Tuohy
Thinks the Hulk has an identity crisis

Jason Marzloff
Can photocopy the Hulk faster than anyone

Chris Carroll, James DeSimone, Brent Ferguson, Jeanne Geier, Michael Lé & Mel Sanchez
THink the Hulk needs a new shade of green

Bryan Cairns, Dean Davis, Barry Dutter, Lysa Hawkins, Matt Idelson, Jim Krueger, Andy Mangels, Rob Piotrowski, Benny Powell, Peter Sanderson, Bob Sodaro, Jason White & Polly Watson
Think the Hulk needs Hooked on Phonics

Bill Rosemann
Can body slam the Hulk in his dream

Nancyann Volpe
Still thinks these credits are stupid

Susan Raso
Wishes the Hulk would get Tim on schedule

Suzanne Paquin
Said the Hulk was a lousy date

Louis Mourais
Can ski better than the Hulk

John Stack
Drives better than the Hulk

Vito Incorvaia
Thinks the Hulk needs a makeover

Bob Harras
Likes wearing Hulk ties

Jim (Ski) Sokolowski
Looks like the Maestro

Shirrel Rhoades
Thinks purple pants are en vogue

David J. Schreff
Tells the Hulk what to do

Scott Sasa
Likes the Hulk

Sounds like everyone's favorite green-skinned behemoth is announcing his arrival, doesn't it?

Well, actually it's artist Adam Kubert. He's hunched over his drawing table wearing oh-so-stylish purple pants and green spray-painted foam muscles.

Why is he doing this?

Did he get beat up as a kid in school? Is it his punishment for giving the editor that writes his praises excruciatingly painful head noogies? Well, maybe there's some truth in that, but what he's actually doing is getting into character to work on his new monthly book. THE INCREDIBLE HULK. Does that mean when he drew WOLVERINE he taped fake hair and claws on his arms and walked around on his knees? I'm not saying but if anyone has photos...

Adam, as well as the rest of the Kubert clan, has been an ardent supporter of VISION since it first came out and I'm always excited when they begin a new project. You know it'll be good.

Frank Teran is another product of the Kubert School. He came into Marvel about 5 years ago on a class trip and managed to pick up some work. After a stint at some other companies he returned with an amazing issue of WHAT IF? and the KA-ZAR one-shot. Not only is he a great up-and-coming artist but he also lives in New Jersey.

Tim Townsend, the inker on UNCANNY X-MEN, doesn't live in New Jersey but that's okay. His inks on UNCANNY are nothing short of phenomenal.Also in this issue is an interview with the new artist on IRON MAN, Ryan Benjamin, as well as all the usual craziness.

Tim's box of useless information #2

In a completely geeky display, while watching an episode of Deep Space Nine, I knew the coordinates of the terran solar system were 000 mark 000.

I'm done. TIM TUOHY

Taking Flight to New Heights

Canada's Heroes Regroup to Take on the World

BY ROBERT PIOTROWSKI

"Well, it's about time!" (accurately pronounced 'a-bōt time' where I come from). It took hundreds of letters of request and two crowded home pages on the net, but Alpha Flight is back and better than ever! After being shelved due to cutbacks by the government-run Department H, Canada's #1 team of super heros returns in their own monthly book penciled by Scott Clark and written by Steve Seagle.

(We considerately provide this short break to allow for jumping up and down in joyous hysterics before continuing.)

Now then, fans will want to begin jostling for position outside their favorite comic shops in May for a chance to snatch up ALPHA FLIGHT FLASHBACK. This special event one-shot will travel back in time to center around the wedding of James "Mac" McDonald Hudson and Heather Hudson and, according to Editor Jaye Gardner, "provide readers with useful insight into some of the things that will be happening in the current ongoing series and shed new light on Mac and Heather's courtship." One month later, the new team will officially debut in the double-sized ALPHA FLIGHT #1.

Although the series will use much of the history established in the team's previous run, this ain't no retro redux. There are some major changes in store for Alpha Flight, including costume redesigns, power alterations, and a new lineup. "What we're going to do is make the series accessible to new readers as well as try and please long-time fans," says Writer Steve Seagle. "The cast of Alpha characters was just huge, too huge to keep it the way it was as far as we were concerned." Regardless, there are some things that were meant to be. "We had to keep the first family of Alpha Flight, Mac and Heather. But because they've always had similar powers, Guardian will continue using electromagnetic forces and Heather will get a new battlesuit complete with powers that are tied to the earth's geothermic forces."

"Puck, whom I consider to be the core of the team, will also be returning to the ranks. However, he will get a new costume and will no longer be portrayed as a tall man stuck in a dwarf's body. He's a dwarf, period. That's what makes him human."

In addition, be prepared for the return of Madison Jeffries, whose former relationship with Vindicator is destined to stir up some steamy confrontations, as well as a revamped Sasquatch who is "definitely the worse for wear these days. He's dirty and there are flies buzzing around him constantly. He's also acquired a set of fangs and, at this point, cannot communicate." That's where the new recruits come in, one of whom has the ability to subdue the overgrown and severely underwashed Sasquatch. "Murmur is a French Canadian with the ability of hyper-strong suggestion. If she were to touch you and say 'sleep', you'd fall to

the floor unconscious. That's a strange power but it comes in very handy, especially with Sasquatch who is liable to lash out at anyone, friend or foe."

Rounding off the greener side of this lineup are two half-brothers, Flex and Radius. "One of the things we will be exploring is whether or not these two are mutants," explains Seagle. "Radius is brash and headstrong and has a personal forcefield. Flex is withdrawn and can flex parts of his body into razor-thin metal sheets."

As for the rest of the originals, Seagle sympathizes with diehard fans: "We know that everyone has their favorite characters from the previous series and we will eventually find out what happened to all of them but not in issue #1. Not even by #4. Just bear with us and we'll get to everyone in due time."

Luckily, Department H fans (you know who you are) have nothing to fear. Every red-blooded Canuck's least favorite government office is also back, considerably larger, a bit tougher, and more controlling than ever. According to Editor Jaye Gardner, "Department H is going to take a very strategic approach to the Alpha Flight project. They will not simply ask the members to return but almost manipulate them into duty. This will strike a particularly raw nerve with Heather because of the treatment she was subjected to in the past."

"As we open up this chapter of Alpha Flight history, militarism and super heroes are a lot more prevalent within Canada," adds Seagle. "That's mostly because of the absence of heroes in the Marvel Universe. Basically, there's an arms race using heroes instead of weapons. At the same time, the figureheads within Department H have changed and with them, the political climate." Consequently, it's only a matter of time before something is rotten in the Great White North. "The question that both readers and the characters themselves will begin asking is what's behind Department H's drive to get Alpha Flight functional again. Is it the cover story that they're giving the members of the team or something more sinister? I'd say it's probably the latter."

" They were the dream of one man and their country's only heroes. Now they are the world's only hope and their own worst enemies. The dream is alive, God help us all."

The reason behind all of this bureaucratic backstabbing? "I like to play with how much characters can rely on the things they're told," explains Seagle. "In the case of any government bureaucracy issuing orders to something as powerful as a team of super heroes, you would have to question what their motives are. Especially when you're placing your life on the line for them." It will become apparent very quickly that Department H has, in fact, a number of agendas in regard to the members of its new superteam. But most of those secrets are being kept under lock and key for the time being.

And you all thought Canadians were polite and soft spoken. See? HAH! (Sorry, it slipped.) However, according to Seagle, the Canadian culture will play a very large role in this series. But not perhaps in the way many may expect. "Having re-read all of the letters pages of the previous series, I discovered a raging controversy. Readers continuously complained that there wasn't enough Canadian content in this book even when there was a Canadian working on it. I've been to Canada and it's a great country. With the help of our Canadian informant and Toronto resident Rob Walton, both Scott and I will try to be as accurate as possible. The thing is though, just as X-MEN is not about Westchester County, ALPHA FLIGHT is not about Canada. This book is about a group of teammates who

happen to be Canadian. There's no question that Canadians are influenced by cultural elements that are significantly different than those in the U.S. Therefore, these characters will speak and think according to the influences which are inherent to their nation. But, just as with comics whose teams are based in the States, these characters are a lot more than just where they live."

Being Canadian does have one very noticeable perk in the Marvel Universe however; it increases one's chances of rubbing elbows with fellow Canucklehead and X-Man badboy Wolverine. Logan will make sporadic appearances in the series including ALPHA FLIGHT FLASHBACK and ALPHA FLIGHT #1. Fans can also look forward to the sometime X-Man known as Sunfire heating things up for Alpha Flight on a semi-regular basis. "This is very much an X-book in many ways," reports Seagle. "The number of guest appearances will be limited but it can't help but tie in because that's where ALPHA FLIGHT comes from." (For those of you who have suffered irreversible memory lapses due to psychological implants and/or genetic overhauls, it was actually Heather and husband Mac who found the savage Logan in the wilderness and were responsible for beginning his long trek back to humanity.)

Now, you'd think with that kind of lineup and those contacts, the new Alpha Flight would have a heck of a time finding someone willing to throw down with them. You'd think that, but you'd be wrong. Along with having to answer to an establishment they suspect of foul play and trying to mesh three new recruits with a handful of seasoned fighters, Alpha Flight will have to deal with a wide assortment of villains including the revamped terrorist organization known as Zodiac. But are they worried? Nah. They're bigger and stronger than ever (and Canadian to boot!). Not to mention fully covered under our health care plan.

Hey, it doesn't get any better.

THE NEW ALPHA FLIGHT

CODENAME: GUARDIAN
REAL NAME: JAMES MACDONALD 'MAC' HUDSON
SPECIAL ABILITIES: BATTLESUIT INDUCED ELECTROMAGNETIC POWERS

CODENAME: VINDICATOR
REAL NAME: HEATHER HUDSON
SPECIAL ABILITES: BATTLESUIT INDUCED GEOTHERMIC POWERS

CODENAME: N/A
REAL NAME: MADISON JEFFRIES
SPECIAL ABILITIES: TRANSMUTATES AND CONTROLS METALS

CODENAME: PUCK
REAL NAME: EUGENE MILTON JUDD
SPECIAL ABILITIES: EXCEPTIONAL ACROBAT AND FIGHTER

CODENAME: SASQUATCH
REAL NAME: DR. WALTER LANGKOWSKI
SPECIAL ABILITIES: SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH, RESISTANCE TO INJURY, IMMUNITY TO HIGH DEGREES OF COLD

CODENAME: RADIUS
REAL NAME: JARED CORBO
SPECIAL ABILITIES: FORMULATES PERSONAL FORCEFIELD

CODENAME: FLEX
REAL NAME: ADRIENE CORBO
SPECIAL ABILITIES: FLEXES PARTS OF BODY INTO RAZOR-THIN METAL SHEETS

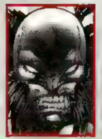
CODENAME: MURMUR
REAL NAME: ARLETTE TRUFFAUT
SPECIAL ABILITIES: HYPER-STRONG SUGGESTION TRIGGERED THROUGH PHYSICAL CONTACT

Weather
Unseasonably warm with chance of showers late in the day. High will be in 80's with a low of 77.

DAILY BUGLE®

IN THIS ISSUE
Wolverine gives tips on nail and hair grooming.

May 14, 1997 New York's Finest Daily Newspaper Fifty Cents



GETTING MIGHTY CROWDED

Host of Heroes Fill Society's Defense Gap

Mark Powerless, UPI

Since the tragic fall of the world's greatest heroes at the hands of Onslaught, a host of heroes, most notably the Thunderbolts, have emerged from all corners of the world, valiantly attempting to fill the hole left in society's defenses. Yesterday, that gap was further filled.

Martial arts expert Iron Fist, who has not been seen in action since an encounter with Spider-Man many months ago, returned to the scene of heroism yesterday along with his former partner, Luke Cage, also known as Power Man. The duo, who ran a heroes for hire trade until the apparent death of Iron Fist, appeared together as friends, promoting their new business. Along with Cage and Iron Fist were a small collection of heroes, two of whom are well known to the world at large: the Black Knight, formerly of the Avengers, and the ever-questionable Hulk, who was recently involved in a political stalemate with the United States Government when he took over an island in the Florida Keys.

Little is known so far about the group except that their services are for sale when it involves actions for good. However, with the recent arrival of new heroes like the Thunderbolts and the return of others, there is some concern about how morally ambiguous a group of super heroes who sell their services rather than volunteer them might really be.

--Continued in HEROES FOR HIRE #1

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE...

Robbie Robertson

It's been a lifetime since the Fantastic Four first introduced themselves to the world, and even longer since the Invaders last fought in the name of freedom. Yet in reality, only a relatively short time has passed since Reed and Sue Richards, along with Benjamin Grimm and Johnny Storm, took that historic rocket flight, forever changing the way we judge the mettle of a hero.

And since that fateful day, it seems almost as if the world's population has been doubled, what with the arrival of all manner of super-powered beings. Indeed, a veritable plethora of bright costumes and fantastic powers has descended upon the world, protecting the citizen-at-large and inspiring a host of others to follow the path of heroism. Yesterday, a new group calling itself Heroes for Hire arrived on the super hero scene, and all I could think was, "How wonderfully little things have changed." It wasn't that long ago that a collection of heroes moved into the famous Stark Mansion in Manhattan, held a press conference, and the Avengers were born.

What is the mission of Heroes for Hire? What noble words did they speak upon their revelation to the world yesterday? It doesn't really matter, for their intent is clear: to serve and protect. To safeguard our troubled globe yet another day. In the absence of a Fantastic Four or Avengers, it seems as if nature itself has moved to fill the gap left in the wake of Onslaught. Almost like a weather front correcting a pattern of drought, so too have heroes emerged from all corners of the globe to refill the ranks, some of mysterious origin, others for hire. In the final analysis, there is no difference. And while our publisher would probably not be too pleased to hear me use it in this context, I think the old adage applies quite nicely here: the more things change, the more they stay the same.

BOLTS BATTLE ZOLA

Ralph Machismo

New York's latest super-team, the Thunderbolts, rode to the rescue once again yesterday, foiling an insane plan by the scientific genius, Arnim Zola. Having transferred his consciousness into a robot body to escape the fall of the German government at the end of World War II, Zola, has been a recurring thorn in the side of American security for decades. Yesterday, he struck again, unleashing a plot which could only be described as insane.

Zola attempted to transform numerous members of the homeless population into genetically augmented slaves, the purpose of which remains unknown. Conceivably, Zola could have created an army of slaves. The Thunderbolts apparently tracked Zola down to his laboratory, defeating the mad genius and securing the safety of New York once more.

--Continued in THUNDERBOLTS #4

KA-ZAR ARRIVES IN NEW YORK

Julio Paco, Bugle Staff

Last week, we reported an apparent connection between businessman Parnival Plunder and the mysterious individual known as Gregor, who is believed to have trained Kraven the Hunter. Plunder has long been suspected of conducting criminal activities in addition to his legitimate business practice, though he has never been convicted. Authorities have been keeping a close eye on Parnival's business headquarters, ensuring that no transgressions of the law occur.

Yesterday, more circumstantial evidence presented itself when Parnival's celebrated brother Kevin arrived in New York City. Also known as Ka-Zar, lord of the Savage Land, Kevin Plunder is himself as much an object of speculation as his rich and famous brother.

The sons of Lord Gerald Plunder, Kevin and Parnival have descended from a long line of British aristocracy. In addition to controlling the vast Plunder fortune, Lord Plunder was also a renowned explorer, inventor, and the discoverer of the fabled Savage Land while on an expedition of the Antarctic. It was there that he died while on a follow-up expedition, and for a period of time it was believed that Kevin, who had accompanied him, had also perished. It was not until years later that the fact of Kevin's survival was discovered. By that point, Kevin had spent many years isolated from civilization. Dressed only in minimal clothing like some kind of caveman, Kevin had lost most of his language skills, which he regained following a renewed exposure to society. Now calling himself Ka-Zar, Lord of the Savage Land, Kevin married Shanna O'Hare, a San Francisco native, and renounced both the outside world and the Plunder fortune in favor of a back-to-the-basics existence in the undeveloped Savage Land.

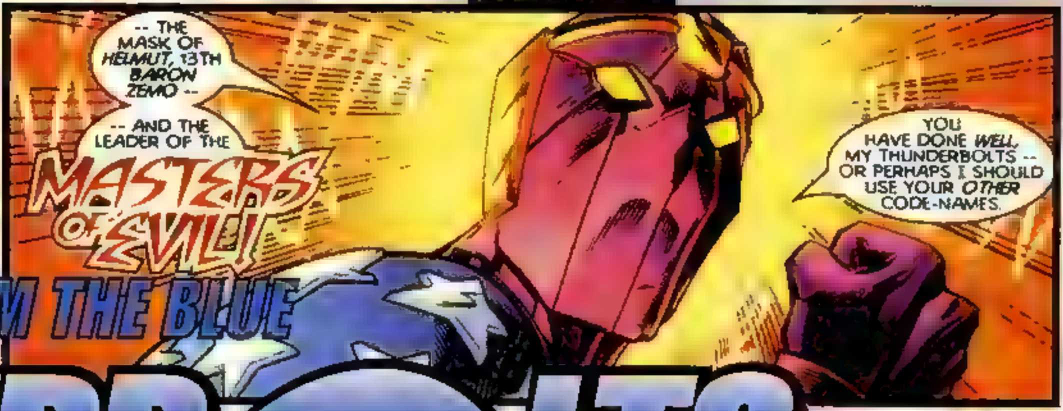
Years have passed since Ka-Zar was last heard from, and even longer since he journeyed to New York. While no one was willing to go on record, numerous law-enforcement officials privately speculated that Ka-Zar's arrival is a confirmation that Parnival Plunder may be conducting criminal activities.

Ka-Zar himself was unavailable for comment, though witnesses say he seemed like a man possessed, and very distracted. Police and reporters alike attempted to follow Ka-Zar without success. Noticing the entourage he had inadvertently created, Ka-Zar scaled the side of a building, swung from a flagpole to a nearby rooftop, and disappeared from sight, leading one reporter to comment that the Savage Land has nothing on the jungle that is New York.

--CONTINUED IN KA-ZAR #3-4

LIKE BOLTS FROM THE BLUE

THUNDERBOLTS



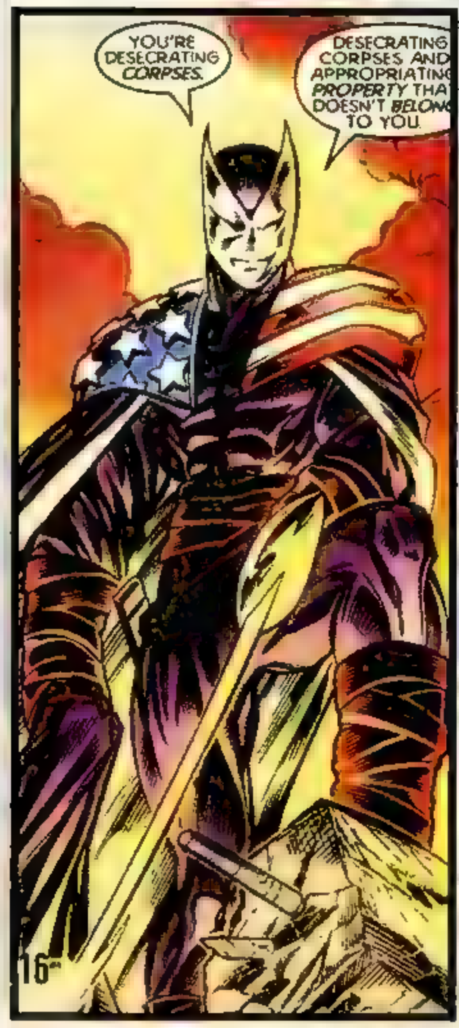
A few months ago, one of comics' best-kept secrets was explosively revealed in the shocking final scene of THUNDERBOLTS #1. Fans across the world witnessed the unmasking of New York's newest, most mysterious group of super-powered protectors: Citizen V, Atlas, Songbird, Meteorite, Techno, and Mach-1. They were astonished to find that this beloved new super-team that had risen to fill the void left by the Avengers and the Fantastic Four was actually made up of disguised members of the notorious Masters of Evil! Now the citizens of Marvel Universe New York continue to pay accolades to their new champions, while a breathless fandom awaits the full revelation of the T-Bolts' secret master plan — and what effect it will have on a trusting humanity in a world bereft of its greatest champions! The world doesn't yet know that it has clutched a viper to its breast — but now we do, leaving us all to wonder, "What's next?"

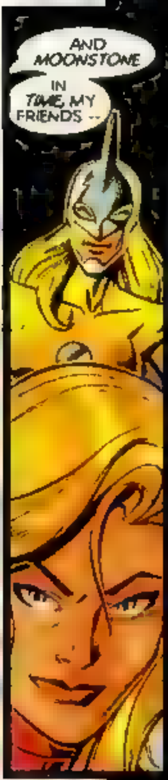
To answer that, we went straight to the men most in the know — Kurt Busiek, originator of the concept and writer of THUNDERBOLTS and his editor, Tom Brevoort. Asked about the genesis of this most off-beat team of "heroes," Tom said that it was a pretty simple story: "There was a writers conference last July starting on a Thursday. I talked to Kurt on that previous Monday, and Kurt pitched the idea to me very briefly over the phone: 'It's a project I want to do with Mark Bagley. A new group of heroes shows up out of the blue after the Avengers and the FF seemingly died in the wake of the Onslaught event. They become popular, they're embraced by the public, and earn the respect of the citizens. Then we find out they're the Masters of Evil.' I liked it. One night, hanging out at the hotel bar during the conference later that week, I pitched it to (editor in chief) Bob Harras — and lo and behold, he said, 'Sounds cool. Let's do it!' I wish they all were that easy a sell!"

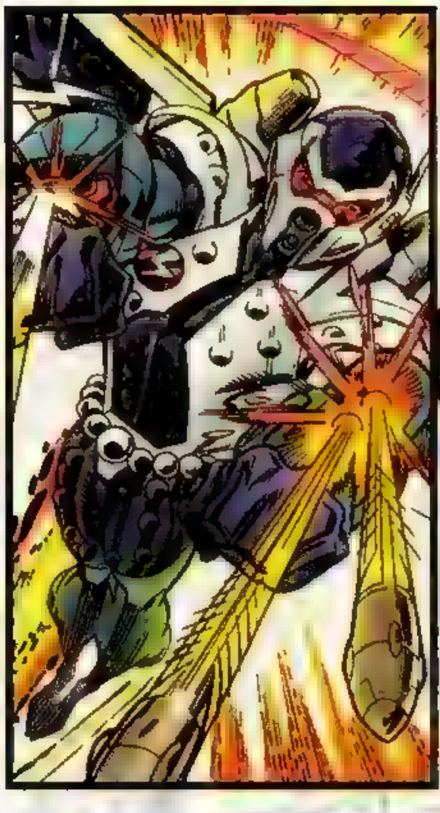
With precious little time to set the stage for the series debut, Kurt and Tom nevertheless arranged for the T-Bolts to guest-star in an issue of INCREDIBLE HULK (By the way, who out there caught the clue in that story? The Hulk recognized the voice of Songbird, a.k.a. his old foe Moonstone!) and later to have a chapter in the blockbuster one-shot TALES OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE. Both stories succeeded in tweaking readers' curiosity about these new costumed champions.

"One of the reasons we told people what the set-up was, who all these characters were, by the end of issue #1," Kurt Busiek reveals, "was so that the reader can watch as things unfold. The Thunderbolts still have to function as a super hero team, and the results of their actions will have an effect on them as people. Right now, their plans are villainous, their intents are evil, but who knows where things will lead? A lot can happen, especially when you're in the public spotlight and millions of people are cheering for you."

On the subject of the hints of romance among the team members and signs of some of these wolves in sheep's clothing beginning to enjoy their adulation as heroes, Kurt plays it close to the vest: "Well, obviously, we wouldn't be putting that stuff in if it wasn't leading somewhere. Romances between the characters, both on the team and off, are certainly a part of the book. As for enjoying the adulation and fame, these are a bunch of guys who, for the most part, have been in and out of jail, hanging around skeevy hideouts, not having a particularly great time of it. And when you stop and think about someone like Atlas — who started out as a







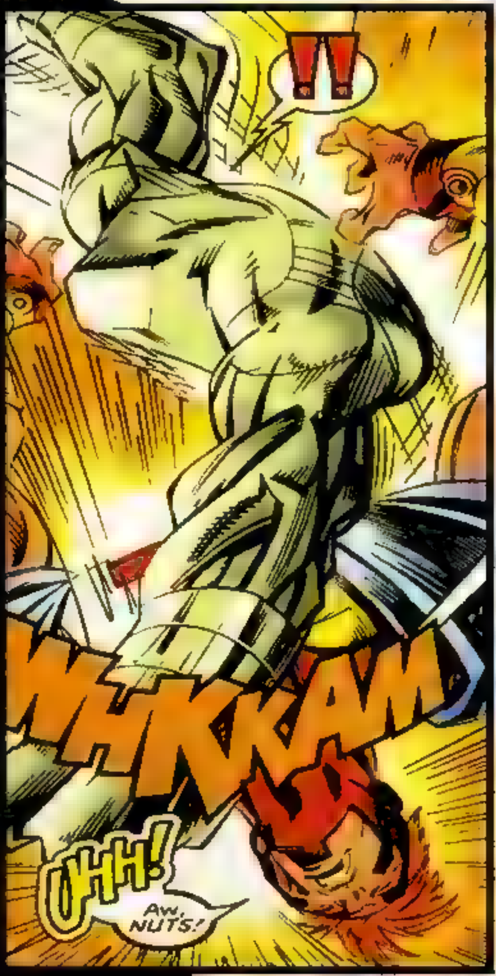
mercenary, he's in it chiefly for the money. In the beginning for him, this was just more of a professional assignment than any personal drive. With the Beetle/Mach-1, he was sick of people dismissing him. He wanted to be somebody. Well, he is somebody now, isn't he? Is following through on Zemo's plan the most attractive option in the long run?" Kurt sums up the series' uniqueness from other team books as pivotal to its success. "Like the X-MEN or AVENGERS, the character interplay affects the ongoing series as a whole," he explains, "but it's also got a hidden agenda behind it. Most super-teams don't have an active plan. Their plan is 'There's trouble out there; we've got to stop it.' With the Thunderbolts, this is only their front. They are actively aiming themselves not to protect the status quo but to change it. Anything that changes the team dynamics will, of course, affect how that master plan plays out."

Probably the biggest change to the group's dynamics and the biggest monkey wrench in Citizen V's overall plan comes in issue #4, with the arrival of the team's newest member — a spunky, fledgling young super heroine named Jolt. But, as with most characters introduced in THUNDERBOLTS so far, she's not quite what you expect. Says Kurt, "There's a new player on the team, and this one is not a villain!" Tom Brevoort describes the all-new character as, "wide-eyed, idealistic, a natural leader. She's not a super-villain and does not know the true identities of her teammates. And this will prove to be a problem." Tom revealed that Jolt will definitely play an important role in the group dynamics. "Atlas will start to see her as a surrogate sister, whereas Moonstone/Meteorite begins to see her as a potential ally to her own plans. Most importantly, the point is that all the members of the group now have to proceed more cautiously."

Kurt spoke with enthusiasm for his latest creation and her place in the storyline. "She does not know the big secret. So now rather than the Thunderbolts putting on their public faces for the outside and being safe as themselves on the inside, they now have to keep their public faces on twenty-four hours a day. Jolt will basically be a catalyst for changing a lot of things."

So aren't some of the super-villains out there that the Thunderbolts encounter bound to recognize them at some point? "That's a good question," Kurt said. "Take Meteorite, for example. How different really is she from Moonstone? But by the same token, how different is she from someone like, say, Binary? Or another blond woman with energy powers? In comics, your best friend can put on a mask and you wouldn't recognize them. I would think the change in moves, costume and attitude is disguise enough. If it isn't, then all the heroes in the Marvel Universe have really stupid friends! Also, look at what they're doing. If you saw Atlas saving the day somewhere, your first thought would most likely be, 'Oh, there's some giant hero saving the day,' and probably you wouldn't bother to look deeper. Seriously, though, there are going to be things that come up that cause people to question whether things are as they seem on the surface. If you take a closer look, there are things to turn up. How many giants are there in the world, anyway? Where did this Atlas guy come from?"

Now that the T-Bolts have met Spider-Man (in SPIDER-MAN TEAM-UP #7), Kurt tells us that there are not a lot of guest stars in the immediate future — mainly because there are more than enough interesting characters in the pages of T-BOLTS that he still has yet to explore. However, the possible return of the Marvel flagship heroes from the pocket universe of "Heroes Reborn" poses interesting situations for Zemo's master scheme – and the series' direction. "By the end of issue #4, we've got seven main characters and we won't have seen any of them out of costume yet! So in issue #5, they take the day off. We'll see them out on the town, out of costume, and relaxing. This has been the first opportunity to do that. I do want to give myself some space." Kurt pointed out, "It's one thing to have a super hero guest appearance in DAREDEVIL, but it's pretty rare to see one in, say, AVENGERS, mainly because you're using every page you can manage to keep things going with all the individual Avengers. The Thunderbolts will have plenty of things to do which will eventually bring them into contact with other Marvel heroes, but not right away." And what happens when — and if — the Fantastic Four return and find the Thunderbolts hanging out at their headquarters? "That's something I'd obviously have to take up with the writer of the FF at some point. Who knows? The Thunderbolts could hang on to Four Freedoms Plaza. The Thunderbolts could move out of Four Freedoms Plaza. The Thunderbolts could decide they want to stay and the FF could take them to court. There could be fireworks between the teams. There are many options if the FF do indeed return to this universe. People keep asking me, 'Well, if the Avengers come back, won't the Thunderbolts' secret have to be exposed?' I respond, 'Why



would you think that?' The truth is, I do have a firm idea as to the direction the book will take after the secret is revealed and the master plan plays out. And it does tie in to the heroes returning. By issue #12, I believe we will see Zemo's master plan come to a head. What happens after that, I do have figured out, but to say more would give away the details of the plan, so I'd rather leave it at that!"

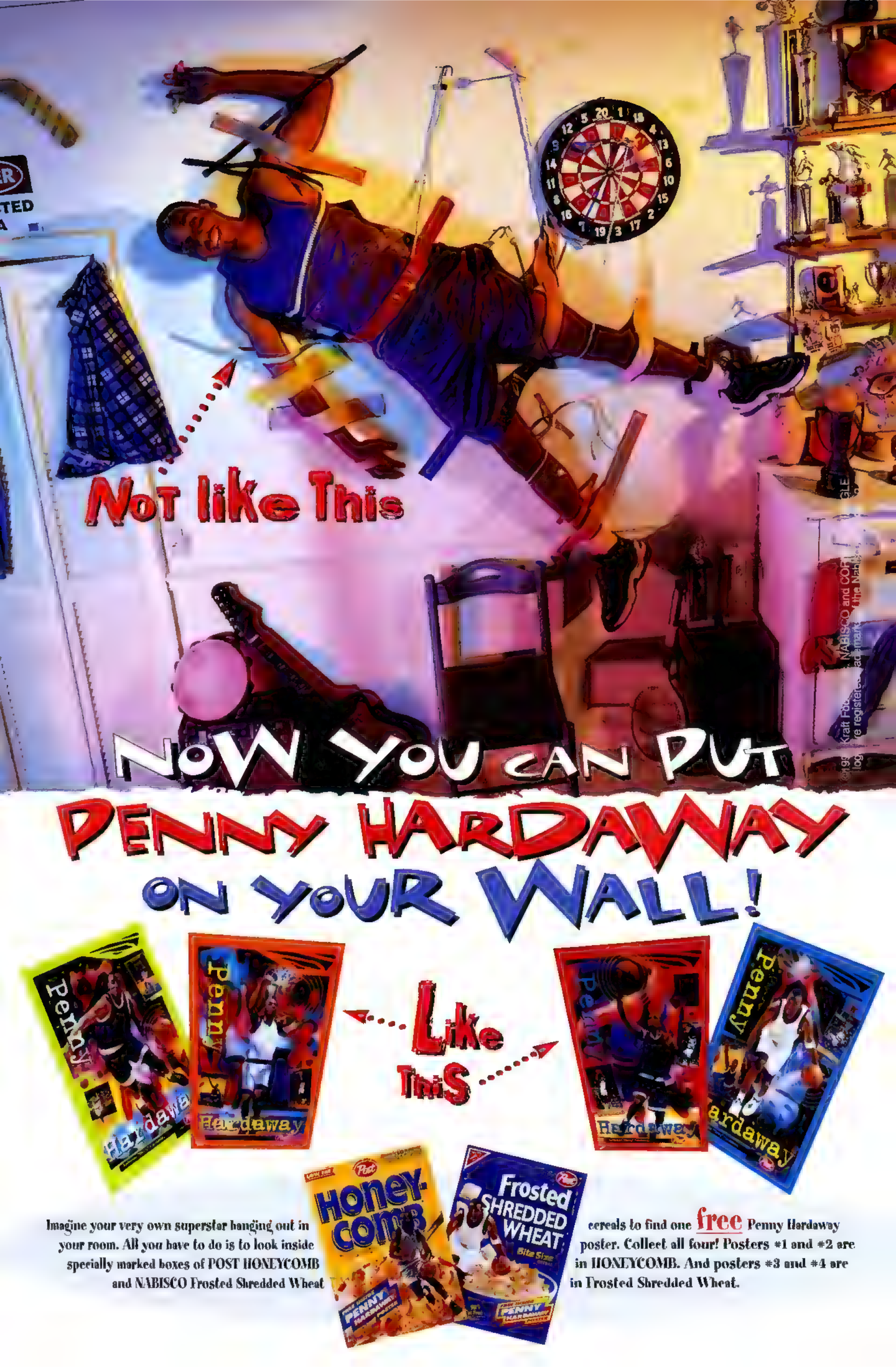
Kurt sums up the twists and turns still coming in the series succinctly. "At the end of issue #1, people didn't know what we were gonna do next. By the end of issue #12, they are going to feel the same way. And by the end of issue #15 or 16, they're gonna feel that way again!"

In addition to the adventure and intrigue served up in the monthly series in the coming months, fans of the T-Bolts will be able to learn even more about the characters in the THUNDERBOLTS: DISTANT RUMBLINGS one-shot special, and in the 1997 THUNDERBOLTS ANNUAL! Asked what possessed him to put together a special edition for June's "Flashbacks" event in addition to the regular monthly T-BOLTS issue, Tom Brevoort responded with a chuckle. "Stupidity, mainly!" he revealed. "The idea of the special arose mainly because of a complication. We knew that June was Flashbacks month across the line, but we'd only had three months to establish the series and the characters, and didn't want to sacrifice any momentum early on by slotting in a story from the past in issue #4. By the same token, both Kurt and I thought the idea of flashing back to the early days of these characters was a cool idea, so we decided to do an extra Flashbacks one-shot. The artwork is by Steve Epting and Bob Wiacek, and it's just beautiful!" On the story front, Kurt elaborated, "This takes place three years before the FF went on their fateful space flight. Helmut Zemo is an adult, but his father is the one in the mask. Atlas is working for the elder Zemo as a mercenary. The Beetle is working as a mechanic in an aircraft factory. The Fixer is actually already a costumed villain. Remember, when we first saw him in that silver age SHIELD story, he was breaking out of jail, and already had a reputation! Moonstone is a young psychiatrist. What this story does, rather than reveal how they all came together, is give you a snapshot of how they were before. For example, the Beetle's motivation for becoming a super-villain has never really been explored. It really hasn't come up since his first appearance in STRANGE TALES. Someone who goes back and reads that story will understand why he became a villain, but I don't believe that story has ever been reprinted, and it's pretty darn expensive now! So it may be high time for a reminder!"

The annual, on the other hand, does indeed tell the tale that we've all been curious about. Tom told us, "It's the full origin of the group. The annual shows everyone in detail how the characters in the group got from the last place we saw them to THUNDERBOLTS #1. This is the story that fills in those blanks." Tom informed us that the Annual is one of those great old-fashioned "jam" issues, boasting a whole roster of talented artists. Some of the people we'll see showcased in the annual are series artist Mark Bagley (who draws the framing sequence), George Perez, Tom Grummett, Ron Randall, Bob McLeod, Gene Colan, Chris Marrinan, and Darick Robertson.

So what specific challenges await our "heroes" in the pages of the monthly THUNDERBOLTS title? Issue #3 brought us the all-new Masters of Evil, and issue #4 presented the return of Arnim Zola, the Bio-Fanatic. What are Busiek and Bags going to do for an encore? "In issue #5, the Thunderbolts deal with the gigantic threat of the Growing Man!" Kurt told us elatedly. "Kang (his creator) is not behind this one, but we know that he's left his Growing Man androids in various locations throughout time, and this is one that gets discovered by someone else. Issues #6-8 will be a trilogy featuring a group of villains that few readers probably remember: the Elements of Doom! They're humanoid creatures made up of various elements, and there's 105 of them! Iron, Sulfur, Antimony, Arsenic, Radium... I could go on and on. We might not see all 105, but we'll see a lot of 'em. Then we build toward issue #12 with the culmination of Zemo's plan, and then issue #13-14 will probably be a story featuring outer space and extra-dimensional characters. Then it may be time for a rematch with the Wrecking Crew from issue #1. I always thought the Wrecking Crew were great. They're big, they're dumb, they're strong. They break things. What else do you need to know?"

—Mark Bernardo (wants to dress like Citizen V and not scare the world)



Not like This
NOW YOU CAN PUT
PENNY HARDAWAY
ON YOUR WALL!
Like
ThiS
Penny
Hardaway
HONEY-COMB
Frosted
SHREDDED
WHEAT
Imagine your very own superstar hanging out in your room. All you have to do is to look inside specially marked boxes of POST HONEYCOMB and NABISCO Frosted Shredded Wheat cereals to find one free Penny Hardaway poster. Collect all four! Posters #1 and #2 are in HONEYCOMB. And posters #3 and #4 are in Frosted Shredded Wheat.

Back in the 1960s, Gene Colan joined forces with Stan Lee to produce one of the most beloved runs on DAREDEVIL ever. Recently, Gene "The Dean" returned to take DD by the horns and lead him into daring new adventures! Here, Gene talks about what it's like to be back where he belongs, illustrating that sightless swashbuckler, the Man Without Fear!

an interview with gene colan

"i saw some of jack kirby's work— i couldn't believe that human hands had touched it."

Gene Colan has been penciling ever since he was three years old! Born in the Bronx in 1926, Gene recalls, "I think I was at the age of three when I began to show some ability to draw. The first thing I ever drew was a lion, from what I'm told! (laughter) I was always drawing. It was my favorite thing."

As a child, Gene was inspired by the work of such comic strip artists as Milton Caniff, Harold Foster, and Colton Waugh, who did a strip called Dickie Dare, which Gene cites as his favorite. "I just lived to see how Dickie Dare made out the following day!" (Ironically, Gene would later wind up working on the HOWARD THE DUCK newspaper strip in the 1970's—but only for about six months! Today he notes, "We just couldn't keep the deadlines up! It was impossible!")

So determined was Gene to become a comic book artist that he applied for his first job at DC Comics at the age of 13! Although he wasn't ready for the big time yet, the art director at DC gave Gene a lot of encouragement. "At that time, it wasn't like it is today," Gene remembers. "Somebody would come out to the waiting room and talk to you, look at your work."

Gene realized he wasn't cut out to be a pro on his trip through the DC Bullpen! "I saw some of Jack Kirby's work—I couldn't believe that human hands had touched it. He drew so beautifully that, at that point, there was no way that I could measure up to it."

Gene was advised to go to art school for a few years, and he did so—though he got out of it as quickly as he could! Notes the man ironically nicknamed "The Dean", "School and I never got along!" Gene left school to join the Air Force in 1946, shortly after World War II had ended. He was assigned to the Philippines, where he worked for the Manila Times, drawing scenes of army life from a G.I.'s point of view. Overall, Gene rates his whole tour of duty as "a great experience."

After a year in the service, Gene returned to the States to pursue his dream of becoming a comic book artist. He relates, "The day I came home, the first place I went to was Marvel. I was about 19 or 20. I met Stan [Lee] for the first time, and he was only three years older than me. There he was, sitting in his office with a beanie cap!"

Stan hired Gene on the spot, starting him out with romance and gangster stories, and then war stories a few years later, as the Korean War kicked in. Gene worked steadily, until "the comic book business fell apart in the fifties. It was difficult to get work." Gene reluctantly left the field and went into advertising —a move he was not happy with. "I didn't like it. I don't like working on just one picture. There's no continuity to it. It's just a picture."

One day, Stan called Gene to say the comics were making a comeback. "I began to pick up work here and there. Before you knew it, I was back into it!" Gene credits his wife, Adrienne, with giving him the encouragement to leave advertising and return to comics. He notes, "When I got married, I wasn't even working at the time! (laughter)"

Gradually the comic book industry recovered, and Gene rose to fame as one of Marvel's top artists of the sixties, most notably for his thirty-plus issue run with Stan on DAREDEVIL. Gene calls DAREDEVIL his favorite series of all time, because "the mood isn't all serious. There's a little tongue-in-cheek humor with Foggy. I think that every story should have a little bit of humor in it."

Gene credits Stan Lee with two significant developments: 1) taking a chance on new talents, and 2) giving them the freedom to tell a story their own way. "Stan had a lot of foresight. He could see down the line. There were a lot of people that started out just when I did—John Buscema, for one. He was willing to take a chance on them. Also, he left the artist pretty much alone. He would dictate a short story over the phone, and let (the artist) fill in all the spaces. It wasn't a fully-detailed script that he would write."

Gene continues to enjoy this sort of artistic freedom today. "It's kind of wide open for me. It gives me an opportunity to make things happen, and take a little liberty with (the story), which is nice. I have a lot of freedom at Marvel. It used to be that way with Stan, and it kind of continued that way."

Although Gene has gained quite a reputation for his work on mystical books like DR. STRANGE and horror titles like TOMB OF DRACULA, he said his favorite type of stories to draw are super hero books. "I love the super heroes. I like working with the same character over and over again. When you become familiar with a character, you develop it more and more. It becomes part of you. You put as much realism as you can into it."

As much as he liked working on such titles as DAREDEVIL, IRON MAN, and CAPTAIN AMERICA, one series he never developed a fondness for was the SUB-MARINER. "That was one book I never enjoyed doing! Namor is difficult to draw, because he's got a flat head! It's hard for me to make him a good-looking character without rounding out his head! Also, the book had underwater scenes which I didn't really care about."

Because of his affinity for stories set in real places, Gene admits to a lack of affinity for the science fiction genre. Gene did note that "I love westerns! Maybe one day, they'll come back!"

Other than DAREDEVIL, the series Gene is most associated with is TOMB OF DRACULA, which, as he notes, "I did with Marv (Wolfman) for 11 or 12 years!" Gene has fond memories of TOD, explaining, "I like the atmospheric work. I kind of became known for it. Shadows and dark areas." Gene raved about his frequent collaborator, Tom Palmer, who inked a huge chunk of his

TOD pencils. "He interpreted my pencils beautifully."

Another inker whom the Dean gives high marks to is Al Williamson. "He has a nice, loose, free flowing style. I'm not the easiest penciler to interpret, because I put in a good number of half-tones and gray areas."

Gene says his "flair for the dramatic" in his art stems from his love of movies. "I'm a big movie buff. I had always gone to the films when I was a youngster." This cinematic upbringing has had a significant effect on Gene's comic book work. "Every penciler really is a film director. He casts the characters, sets the stage, sets the lighting, and tells the story. If I had to do it over again, I would have done film."

Part of Gene's love of film comes from his boyhood stints working as an usher at some New York theaters, where he watched the same movies hundreds of times. "I'm highly influenced

by the stories that I've seen in the past in movies." Among the movies that have most influenced his work are "Warner Brothers pictures with Humphrey Bogart and John Garfield...The Maltese Falcon...Mike Hammer movies... There was always rain in those films. Next time you see one of these movies on television, look for bad weather! I liked that. It added to the film, it helped with the drama. Film noir was big on that."

"The private detective in a dank, dark place, with slimy walls and stuff like that would add so much to the atmosphere." Gene found that transferring this atmosphere to his comic art gave his pages an added degree of realism. "Even if it wasn't written in the scripts, I would just have it rain occasionally. Because life is like that!"

Explaining his realistic approach to comics, Gene revealed, "I try to make it as real as possible so that the reader can relate to it, even though it's a cartoon." Whether a story is set in San Francisco or on top of the Empire State Building, Gene takes pictures and does the research. He feels "it makes the character come alive, almost as if he really does exist. Everyone knows that he doesn't, but for a moment, I'd like for people to walk around the city and think, 'Maybe he really does exist!' And then I'd like them to look up and say, 'Maybe I can spot him!'" (laughter)

These days, Gene still watches a lot of movies, only now he watches them on laserdisc, which, as he notes, is "the best way to show them." He professes a special fondness for black and white films. "You could make a point with black and white a lot better than you could with color."

Recuperating from recent eye surgery, Gene is in good health and happy to be back at the drawing board. "I'm enjoying every minute of it! I'm up there in years, but it's good and healthy to be working. I don't know what in the world I would do with myself if I didn't work!"

Although he makes his home in Vermont these days, Gene still occasionally makes the trip into New York to teach at two Manhattan art schools: FIT and his old alma mater, the School of Visual Arts. He thinks the most important lesson for young artists to learn is "Patience. They want to hit the big-time right away." Gene sympathizes with young artists who are just trying to break into the business today. "It's hard for these guys. I feel for them. I really do. It's a tough road—but you gotta hang in there!"

His career started out inspired by "Dickie Dare," and currently he's back drawing DAREDEVIL; clearly Gene Colan is not afraid to take a dare. His artwork covers such diverse projects as the "funny" HOWARD THE DUCK, the "psychedelic" DR. STRANGE, and the "atmospheric" TOMB OF DRACULA.

Having illustrated such a wide variety of characters, it is a certainty that whatever project he chooses next, it will definitely be daring! Truly Gene Colan is a penciler without peer!

–Barry Dutter

MODEL CITIZEN

by BRYAN CAIRNS

Bishop is about to join the ranks of an elite group of super heroes. Coming in May, the futuristic X-Man will be the latest statue released from Marvel Entertainment Group and Creative License.

At 10" high by 10" deep and 10" wide, the fully painted porcelain statue will incorporate Bishop's no-holds-barred attitude. Creative License's Bonnie Berryman describes the dynamic figure. "It's Bishop with big guns, guns blazing. It's a real action-packed kinetic kind of piece. It's in the Danger Room so it's full-training mode for Bishop and because he's one of the more physical X-Men, that's conveyed as well. He's got a grimace on his face so it's very expressive."

One of the statue's unique features is that it's the first one to use a Danger Room scenario. For a change of pace, Ali Coleman said it was appropriate to "stretch our [the sculptor's] wings artistically" by using this distinctive part of the X-Men mythology. The wall behind Bishop will be shot up with large bullet holes, suggesting he is under fire from a technological weapon.

So what does it take to construct such a masterpiece? Creative License President Bonnie Berryman simplified the whole creative process. Step 1 involved choosing a character and playing around with a scene to capture his personality. In this case, Bishop in the Danger Room. The next part is experimenting with poses, trying to maximize the action and character. Sometimes this is accomplished on paper or three-dimensionally. This element is then presented and eventually approved by Marvel. Berryman said the trick here is to make sure the pose is actually manufacturable. Step 3 involves a "rough sculpt" where it's one big chunk of clay with the proper proportions it's going to use. For example, making sure the arm looks long enough in proportion to the body. Finally, the sculptor goes on to carve in the details. In this case, **Ali Coleman**, who designed the Elektra sculpture, will be working on the Bishop statue.

As for why a Bishop statue, his pivotal role in last year's Age of Apocalypse and Onslaught stories have made him one of the X-Men's most recognizable and popular characters. In addition, the companies are trying to alternate between X-Men figures like Wolverine and cult favorites like Rogue and Bishop.

Berryman says the Bishop statue will also appeal to fans because "it ties as closely to the comic book as possible. There's an authenticity there I think the fans really appreciate. The other thing is the X-fans are so dedicated to the stuff."

With a limited production run of between 1500 and 2500, the Bishop statue is sure to disappear quicker than Susan Richards so fans will have to act quickly!

CREATIVE LICENSE

MASTERS OF THE MACABRE

In the last part of this series we will speak to some of the creators who worked on Marvel's various horror titles. **Roy Thomas** was the editor on most of the books while **Marv Wolfman** and **Gene Colan** were the respective writer and artist on TOMB OF DRACULA. They candidly spoke about the heyday of Marvel's mystery books.

Previous Horrific, Prolific Stuff

MW: I did a number of horror stories for DC and Marvel and before that I worked on a fanzine called Stories of Suspense. I liked writing horror pieces although I was never a big fan of reading them.

GC: I started at Marvel in 1946 doing practically everything: westerns, romance, war stories, superheroes, and a bit of horror. I also did some previous horror stuff for EC.

From Bram Stoker To Jack Palance

RT: I wasn't a big EC reader as a kid; I was more interested in Mad Magazine. The horror mags gave me the creeps.

MW: I had never seen a Dracula movie, not the Lugosi version or any other before the time I did TOMB OF DRACULA. I was just never interested in that kind of stuff, or so I thought. When I was assigned the comic I read the novel and fell in love with it. After that I decided to do a version close to Stoker's so why should I see anyone else's interpretation?

GC: I didn't do any research with the novel. I had in mind Jack Palance as the model to work from. His face had that serpentine look to it and I thought he would be the epitome of Dracula. This was before Jack Palance played a vampire in the movies. Also, Reed Crandall did some fabulous horror stuff that I admired.

Setting the Mood to Scare the Pants Off of You!

RT: Nobody had ever done a line of character horror comics before. There had been one-shots and other small projects, but I liked the idea of applying the Marvel approach to the horror types. To avoid any bad connotations left over from the fifties we called them "mystery characters" as opposed to using the words horror or terror. The first revamped Code character Marvel came up with was when Gil Kane and I created Morbius for Amazing Spider-Man, even though he wasn't fully treated as a horror character.

GC: I love to do moody, atmospheric work that relies on dramatic lighting while still trying to make things believable. None of the architecture in TOMB OF DRACULA was made up. I have a huge picture

file covering practically everything. Even if it was a scene in the woods, I relied on reference photos. There's nothing like a real knotted tree. I strive for that kind of authenticity in my work.

MW: Horror really comes from the mind, not from blood on a page. You keep the reader on the edge of their seats by building tension, mystery, and suspense. The blood is just the catharsis at the end and can be dealt with quickly. Besides, once you've done the gore bit where else can you go?

The TOMB OF DRACULA stories were mainly from the point of view of the vampire hunters and not Dracula. I felt one should never get into Dracula's head which is why there was never a thought balloon from him. This kept the mystery going and made him more enigmatic. If you don't know what a character thinks it allows you to create constant surprises.

The Editorial Reins

GC: Nobody ever bothered us...whatever we did was fine.

MW: Marvel tended to hire writers they could trust and let them do some very creative and personal material. It wasn't Roy's style to get too involved with Dracula. The only time he said anything was with my first issue when I used kids as vampires. He said he didn't want to see that anymore because it meant killing the kids first. I avoided that area for the rest of the series.

RT: I gave the creative teams a lot of leeway, but there were certain things we had to do to make the characters recognizable. The novels were long since public domain so we had no problem there. What we did have to avoid was anything close to the Universal Pictures versions. They had been very prone to sue anyone who made someone look too much like Lugosi. They were particularly aggressive on the Frankenstein monster because that was the recognizable Jack Pierce make-up, the small metal nodules on the face and so forth. Those things were not from the book, but from the movie interpretation. If anything, I tried to achieve a monster closer to a Bernie Wrightson type of thing with the 8 foot tall kind of creature. Even then a little Karloff would slip in...it was almost unavoidable. There seemed less of a worry with blatant similarities pertaining to Werewolf by Night and Dracula than there was with Frankenstein.

Sometimes things got a little frantic in the office. Stan came in one day and suggested we have a new magazine called DRACULA LIVES. He came in the next day with two new titles, MONSTERS UNLEASHED and VAMPIRE TALES. The next day he arrived with the idea for the magazine TALES OF THE ZOMBIE. For the main character I remembered something I saw in the archives while searching for stories to reprint in the black and white magazines. I had come across the proofs for the zombie piece Stan had done with Bill Everett in Menace #5. The splash page was really attractive to me and Stan must have liked it because it was one of the few times he actually put his name in the credits of a horror story. I told Steve Gerber to use that as the beginning base of the origin. If memory serves, I think I came up with the name Simon Garth for the Zombie from an old radio character I liked named Garth. Interestingly enough, it was Boris who did the first cover to that book.

Creepy Crossovers

RT: Anybody would have been an idiot not to have them meet eventually. I'm one of the biggest fans of Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein, so to me it was natural.

MW: I don't remember much about the horror crossovers, but I do remember suggesting Dr. Strange and the Silver Surfer guest-appear in TOMB OF DRACULA. The funny thing is, I did have to get Stan's "okay" on the story because it was the first Surfer appearance not written by him. I tried to write it as a God/Satan battle between the Surfer and Dracula, which did fit their personalities. I can't imagine doing a crossover with the Hulk and Dracula.

Swamp Tales

RT: I forget all of the details, but Len Wein (who co-created the Swamp Thing) and Gerry Conway (who did the finished script for the first Man-Thing story) were roommates at the time. Stan made up the story for the Man-Thing without any knowledge at all of Swamp Thing. Stan brought me into his office one day and said, "I want to do a story called the Man-Thing." He had about a one or two sentence origin worked out. What immediately came to mind was the Heap from the Golden Age. I made up the general storyline from those couple of sentences and then I turned it over to Gerry Conway who did a full script. That's why both our names are on the origin. This is the method I used when we created Werewolf By Night and Dracula.

Where Are You Now?

GC: I recently completed some Predator work for Dark Horse and I'm really happy to be currently back on DAREDEVIL.

RT: I'm working on a couple of things for Topps with Xena, Warrior Princess and some X-Files comics. I'm also Co-producer on several episodes of the upcoming live action Conan television show along with some other things.

MW: Right now I'm writing the CGI animated series Reboot and I'm also Co-executive Producer for an animated project called Pocket Dragons. In the world of comics, I'm doing NIGHT FORCE for DC and the upcoming THE MAN CALLED AX.

This three part series was compiled and written by Dean Davis.

TIME SLIP KARNAK

Welcome to the Marvel Universe that would have been if today's hottest creators had been with Stan Lee at the birth of Marvel Comics. Think of this as the world that might have been. Think of it as the world that still might be becoming.

Steve Yeowell, whose penciling and inking abilities have graced such projects as ZENITH for 2000 AD, SEBASTIAN O, THE INVISIBLES, STARMAN, SKRULL KILL CREW and a Banshee solo story in X-MEN ANNUAL #3. Steve takes his remarkable art style to the member of the Inhumans known as Karnak.

Karnak, as known in the Marvel Universe, was the second son of an Inhuman priest/philosopher named Mander and an ocean biologist named Azur. But unlike Karnak's brother Triton who, like other Inhumans, was exposed to the Terrigen mists and therefore received amazing abilities, Karnak would receive power in knowledge. In study and endless hours of contemplation in his father's religious seminary known as the Tower Of Wisdom, Karnak would learn to hone his body into the perfect fighting machine. It was here that he would learn to find the fault, the weak point in any object, and use that knowledge to destroy it. This was a knowledge that he would put to the test as a member of the Inhumans. But there is tragedy in the foundation of the Inhumans' world, for it is a land ruled by traditions held so sacred that the Inhumans themselves are duty-bound to honor them.

But in the world of Time Slip, the world where Steve Yeowell designs Karnak, there is no second son—but a daughter. And in the lost realms of the Hidden Land, where women are prohibited from many of the richest experiences of society, including seminary studies, all knowledge would be denied her. And therefore, Karnak ran from the only home she had ever known, vowing that one day she would return—proving to her family and her people that she is worthy to be an Inhuman.

It is said that there are truths that are so universal, every world philosophy shares them. So it should come as no surprise that this young woman, Karnak, learned these truths. But her schooling did not come from study in the Tower Of Wisdom, for Karnak traveled and was taken in by the African nation of Wakanda. And not only did she learn of the natural laws whereby man and nations are judged, but she learned of the dangers of greed and pride, dangers she never guessed would be very much alive in her world.

In the Marvel Universe we know the Hidden Land of the Inhumans is a world caught up in political red tape and an archaic and corrupted hierarchy. But in the world where Karnak was born female, the world is much different. In fact, it no longer exists.

For Karnak returned to her home, having found the flaw, the weakness in it. And that weakness lay in its people. And she became the shatterer of that world—an enemy of tradition to be scorned forever after.

And the Inhumans, in all their many forms, were spread throughout the entire world. But in time, those willing to be taught and have their eyes opened tasted the freedom of choice—though such freedom was not of their choosing.

Today, it can truly be said that the Inhumans walk among us.

Origin of the Species:

It's the end of the world as we know it...

DEATHLOK The Demolisher!

Welcome to the Big Apple: rusted cars and wrecked buildings are everywhere, the noisy streets of Manhattan now belong to the cannibals, Times Square is a sniper alley. Central Park is a battlefield and The Statue Of Liberty is now CIA headquarters. The U.S. government runs a bitter campaign to exterminate its remaining citizens. Welcome to New York, 1990.

One man walks this wasteland...A cyborg, his thought processes torn between human compassion and coldblooded computer. His name is DEATHLOK THE DEMOLISHER and he remains one of Marvel Comics' most influential creations.

Deathlok and the dark world he lived in may have served as the inspiration for numerous movies. Both THE TERMINATOR and ROBOCOP bear striking similarities to Marvel's own cyborg. Long before Snake Plissken made his ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK, Deathlok tried to get out first. His world was filled with the horrors of cloning, genetic engineering, gene splicing and cryogenics, all issues that are in newspapers now, but the comic foresaw these some 23 years ago.

1974 was a busy year for a new wave of Marvel heroes. This new breed of young turks were tough, no-nonsense characters who held no code against killing. Deathlok was born at roughly the same time as Punisher, Wolverine and Moon Knight. Unlike the others, Deathlok was in a class (and world) by himself.

A 6'4", 395-pound cyborg, Deathlok was a man whose brain, nervous system and salvageable tissue have been transplanted into a synthetic body. His spine, pelvis and major bones have all been replaced by surgical-grade stainless steel. Even his skull is reinforced by lead. He's probably Marvel's ugliest hero.

Deathlok surfaced in the pages of a now defunct Marvel mag called ASTONISHING TALES. Created by artist Rich Buckler and writer Doug Moench, he was not your run-of-the-mill comic-book hero. "Rich Buckler had the initial idea of doing a cyborg character and he came to me with the idea," Moench recalls. "We got together, talked about it and I came up with the name."

Deathlok began life as soldier Luther Manning. Married to an attractive African-American woman named Janice and the father of one young son, Manning died during military wargames, when he stepped on a concussion bomb.

Manning's remains were taken by a crazed CIA official, Major Ryker and used as the organic half of a Cyborg codenamed Deathlok. (Ryker, a dead ringer for the Hulk's father-in-law, 'Thunderbolt' Ross, is also a cyborg.)

The only organic material in the Deathlok cyborg is Manning's scarred and battered head, one half of which is encased in metal and sporting a red cybernetic eye. Manning realizes that his human half can override the machine's murderous impulses and uses them to his own advantage.

His head now discolored and rotting, kept alive only by the Cyborg body, Manning realizes he's now programmed for destruction, yet he's unable to kill himself. With no other choice, Manning (who accepts the codename 'Deathlok' because he is no longer a man) hits the road to find himself.

Manning's powerful cybernetic body allows him to leap great distances and punch through walls. His computer can detect when a gun is being aimed at him or if an assassin is hiding in wait. He has two laser pistols, which he uses frequently. His arms contain slots for inserting computer cards which are used to program him.

What's so amazing about Deathlok is that while it sounds depressing and downbeat, it really isn't it's kicky and exciting. Even though he was a solo character, Deathlok wasn't boring...The character would hold conversations with his computer half, which he nicknamed "'Puter".

Deathlok talks like a man of the street, gruff and sarcastic, while the computer's comments (lettered differently to give it a machine-like effect) are cold and humorless. It's even colored differently than his human thought bubbles.

Grief-stricken when a friend dies in his arms, his computer side coldly tells him, 'JETTISON UNNECESSARY BURDEN'. When Deathlok is upset at seeing his wife, his computer warns him "PRESENT ACTION ILLOGICAL. EMOTIONAL RESPONSE IS ANOMALOUS TO THIS UNIT." Deathlok responds with "Stow it, 'Puter! From now on I'm doin' what I want fer a change!"

There's also a unique third voice that springs from the meshing of his human and computer sides. This voice is a rambling, incoherent mix of the two.

It makes statements like "Feel spurting death slicing through scarlet-ripped hated human flesh destroying killing slashing cutting beauty". Deathlok asks his computer half

"Y'know, 'Puter—I been wondering—is it you or me who contributes the sick streak to our third personality?"

"Rich had the concept and the layouts he was doing were really nice," Moench notes. "They deserved a very unusual writing style to match, so I did this triple narration—first person human, real slangy, then the computer, in first person, and then this weird stream of consciousness which was supposed to represent the human and the computer sort of meshing and rubbing against each other."

Deathlok is an amazingly cynical character, more jaded than most Marvel heroes of that era. He faced more conspiracy theories than a season of THE X-FILES! The cyborg seemed to spring from the two top stories of 1974: Vietnam and Watergate. (Moench admits to "being a big conspiracy buff!")

Americans were sick of war, with the lingering end of the Vietnam war and the fascist revelations of Nixon's Watergate. To imagine a future of neverending wars under a corrupt, amoral government probably didn't seem like a stretch. It's no mistake that he has an American flag imprinted on his Cyborg chest.

On the few occasions Deathlok encountered Marvel heroes, their reactions were always interesting. Spider-Man was appalled by the his brutal methods but realized they were probably necessary for him to survive in future Earth. The cyborg formed an uneasy friendship with The Thing (and his Laser Pistol proved to be tough enough to punch a hole in Ben Grimm's rocky hide).

His cynicism for what his country did to him made his encounter with Captain America almost electric. Mockingly calling the star spangled Avenger 'Mr. Flag', he easily kicked Cap's butt.

The influence Deathlok has had in many major motion pictures is obvious.

ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK copies Deathlok's view of Manhattan as a violent, anarchic hell filled with maniacs, cannibals and gangs. THE TERMINATOR borrows Deathlok's imagery (right down to the glowing red eye) and even gave him similar computer suggested responses.

The ROBOCOP movies take the most...Deathlok is a good man, a soldier with a wife and young son, when he's killed and resurrected as a cyborg by an evil organization. ROBOCOP is the story of a good man, a cop with a wife and young son, when he's killed and resurrected as a cyborg by an evil organization.

Both Deathlok and Robocop are pre-programmed by the evil organizations yet resist the company's brainwashing and attempts to destroy them. They recapture their real identities, keep their evil programmers from wiping their memories, pine away for their families and vow to do their best in life, despite their new situations.

Both RoboCop and Deathlok find their heads transplanted into robot bodies. There's over a dozen similarities between the comic and the ROBOCOP movies obviously one inspired the other. "Yeah, maybe," Moench muses.

"There is a scene in the first ROBOCOP where a character says 'And now gentlemen, I will present something to you which until now has only been seen in comic-books' and then RoboCop walks out.

"There's also that scene, right out of the original DEATHLOK comics (from the mid '70s) where he goes back to see his wife but now he's been turned into a machine, so it's a big, tragic scene," Moench notes. "I have also heard that the people who wrote ROBOCOP are comic book fans, so it seems pretty likely."

"I didn't realize Deathlok was so unique; I think it was ahead of its time. It's only in retrospect that people remember it and are really obsessed with it. When we were doing him, there were no movies like that. Now it seems like all the big movies are like the comics we were doing in the early '70s. They're 20 years behind!"

Deathlok was revived in 1990 (ironically the year he was originally set in), alongside new takes on other Marvel heroes like Namor, Nova and another 1970s cult hero, Ghost Rider. Unfortunately, unlike the new take on Ghost Rider, which took the character and made him even edgier, Deathlok's concept was altered.

Luther Manning was dumped in favor of a revamped Deathlok for the '90s—a politically correct pacifist! Michael Collins, the new Deathlok, lived in a boring, regular New York, not the exciting post-Holocaust Big Apple. He didn't even want to fight, let alone kill. Even his nickname, 'The Demolisher', was dumped. "I couldn't stand it, I thought it was terrible," Moench states.

Disappointed over the treatment of his Cyborg child, Moench sought to recapture the thrills of the earlier Deathlok. "I did a four–part, prestige book from Marvel called 'Coldblood', another character I created. He's a cyborg, hence the name—he's coldblooded. He was Deathlok.

"Marvel asked me to redo Deathlok for the '90s. I did and they said 'Whoops, we changed our mind, we're gonna bring Deathlok back just the way he was', which they didn't really do and they said 'We like what you did so much, why don't you come up with a new name and we'll do that, too.' I came up with the name 'Coldblood' and people say 'Gee, sounds like Deathlok' and I have to explain! He looks totally different."

If Marvel wants to bring back a really exciting character from the '70s, a character who actually aged better than most, they should revive and re-program Luther Manning! Or as Manning's computer half would say, **"AFFIRMATIVE"!**

By Pat Jankiewicz

THE MINDS BEHIND TEKKEN 2 WOULD LIKE TO SHOW YOU HOW SHARP THEY REALLY ARE.
If you thought Tekken 2 was tough, take a stab at Soul Blade for the Sony PlayStation. You'll be transported back to the 15th century where you and ten of the world's most awe-inspiring warriors engage in bloody pursuit of SoulEdge - the ultimate weapon. Since only one warrior will find it, the battles are fast, fierce and furious. Intensified by the fact that the warriors can fight with a huge arsenal of intimidating weapons. Not to mention glowing motion blurs, an authentic weapon-to-weapon combat system, polygon characters, real 3D backgrounds and a host of other awesome features. No wonder Soul Blade is a cut above.
Master the Critical Edge for some incredibly devastating combo's.
With a flash of light and a thunderous sound, blades meet with weapon-to-weapon recoil action.
Intense and inspiring opening cinematics feature multiple, real-time endings for every character.
Beautiful polygon characters and 3D arenas produce action so real, you may want to wear armor.
SOULBLADE
PlayStation
POWERED BY namco
TEEN

Marvel's Silly Moments

cage against the machine

Luke Cage vs. Soda Machine

by Barry Dutter

Over the years, Luke Cage has faced some pretty powerful foes: Moses Magnum, Mace, Chemistro, but perhaps none has been more persistent than the Soda Machine in the lobby outside Cage's office!

Cage first encountered the soda machine in issue #28 of his own mag, LUKE CAGE, POWERMAN. He put his money in, only to be warned by his old pal, D.W., "I wouldn't...use...that...machine." But it was too late. Cage had lost his coins, and gotten nothing in return. The soda machine had made a jerk out of him! The first shots had been fired in a battle that would continue for much of his career!

Against his best judgment, Cage continued to pump money into the soda machine, and each time, went home thirsty. By the time the Mechanical Monster (as Cage called it) robbed him of his pocket change for a fourth time, Cage was enraged! He lashed out at the soda machine, boasting, "That's the last 35 cents this MONEY-HUNGRY MONSTROSITY gobbles up on me!" As he pummeled the machine, Cage was sprayed with gallons of sticky soda, till he gave up his assault. That round, like all the others, had gone to the enemy!

Ever eager to satisfy his thirst, Cage tried again in issue #34, only to have the bottom of his cup drop out and soda spill all over his big yellow boots. This liquid assault prompted Cage to ask his pal, "Are you sure you didn't get this MONSTER from the TWILIGHT ZONE?"

The next time he tried, in ish #35, the soda machine was more than willing to give lucky Luke a beverage...and another...and another...and another...until Cage had so many cups of soda in his hands that he couldn't hold them all, and they spilled all over the floor! D.W. remarked, "You've got to give it to the machine for IMAGINATION, Luke!" Cage responded, "That's NOT all I'd like to give it!"

The diabolical device continued to confound Cage at every turn.

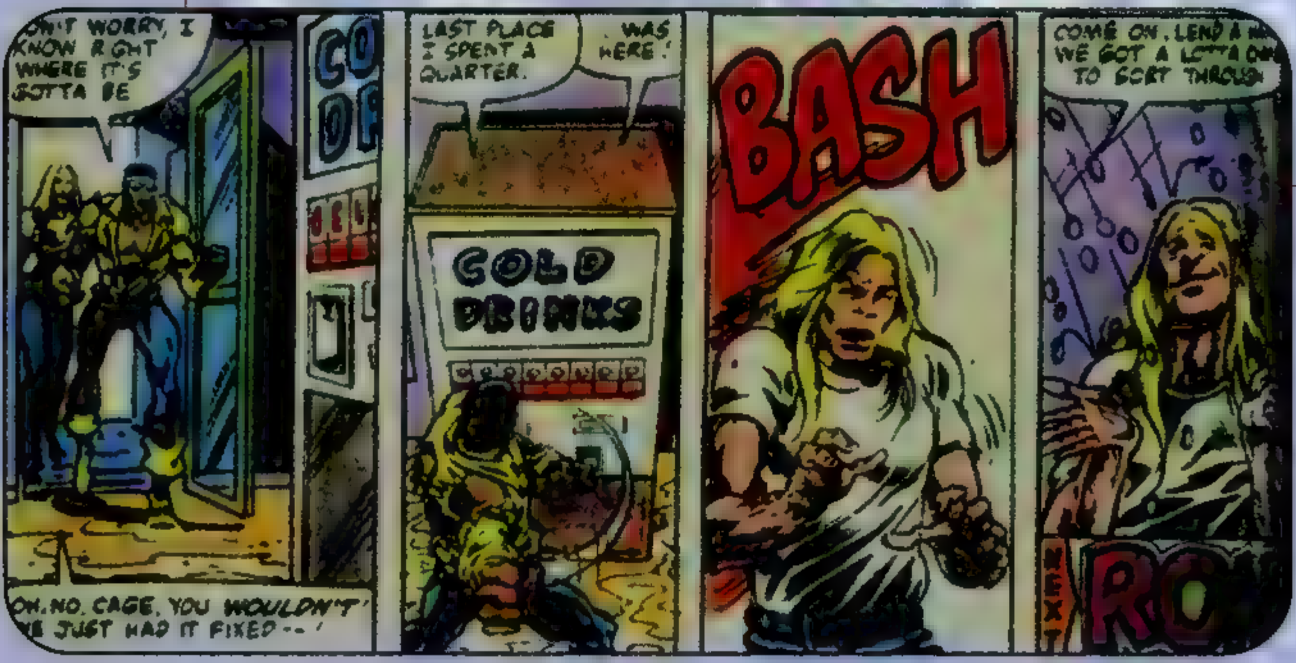
One time it gave him chicken soup instead of soda! (This elicited one of Cage's favorite comments: "CHRISTMAS!") The soda machine actually did give Cage a cup of soda after Cage pounded it in frustration one day, but by then, Cage had walked away and didn't even notice!

The original soda machine perished when a firebomb destroyed the movie theater where Cage's office was located. So it came to pass that Cage himself carried in a new soda machine in issue #66. As he lifted the drink dispenser over his head with one hand, Cage remarked, "Hey, D.W., it took a firebomb to do it, but we finally got us a new Coke™ machine. An' this one better work!"

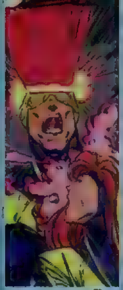
Alas, we never had the chance to find out. Cage's air-head girlfriend, Harmony, suddenly ran over and gave Luke a big hug, causing him to drop the soda machine on the ground, smashing it to bits!

Somehow, D.W. was able to salvage the soda machine, and it was working just fine until Cage came into possession of a mysterious coin which had a hidden microchip inside in ish #71! Cage unknowingly spent the highly coveted coin in the newly repaired soda machine!

Realizing his mistake, Luke knew he had to get the coin out of there somehow. So he did it the only way a Powerman knows how: by ripping the soda machine open with his bare hands! All the coins came tumbling out, and the Coke™ machine hasn't been the same since!



And so Cage had triumphed over his greatest adversary. This particular cola war was over!



Longtime fans of the X-Men remember with great pride X-MEN #30, the now-classic wedding of Scott Summers and Jean Grey. There were no fireworks at the wedding (unless, of course, you count Jubilee). No attacks from mutant haters. No Sentinel threats. But that is not how it was going to be. And few realize the actual wedding of Cyclops and Phoenix was 3 years late.

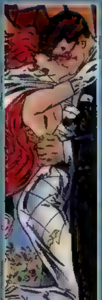
These are the Greatest Comics Never Seen. Stories, scripts, pencils, inks, paints of things that might have been. Stories that could have been had things been different. Stories by creative teams that dropped off titles to pursue other ideas. Legends that were lost because they were never spoken. Stories, perhaps, that were never meant to be. And yet, only on these pages, these stories are made real.

X-FACTOR #66 in May of 1991 was to be where the wedding of Scott and Jean took place. At the time, Marvel's Editor-In-Chief Tom DeFalco felt a wedding of this magnitude would be poorly placed in that title. After all, this was an event for the pages of the UNCANNY X-MEN.

And while the original story of what was to happen in this issue was lost, this single image of the original cover remains—as pencilled by IRON MAN's Whilce Portacio and inked by Jackson Guice.

Apocalypse was to be the wedding crasher. He along with X-Factor's enemies, the Marauders, attacked X-Factor, using their own sentient ship against them. This issue also introduced the Askani, a religious clan of protectors from the future dedicated to the defense and safeguarding of Nathan Summers.

Ironically, though, this major change would not have affected continuity. Baby Nathan, who was already ailing from a techno-organic virus, was already slated to be taken by the Askani to the future where he would be raised to become the hero known as Cable.



And years later, Cyclops and Phoenix would join their son in that future. And in the guise of strangers, they would be granted the privilege of raising their son as an X-Man, a mutant dedicated to bringing peace to a world in the grip of hatred, a planet under the thumb of Apocalypse.

BEAST FILES

SUBJECT FILE: CABLE/NATHAN SUMMERS-DAYSPRING/ASKANI'SON

"WE SHOULD ALL BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE BECAUSE WE WILL HAVE TO SPEND THE REST OF OUR LIVES THERE." — CHARLES FRANKLIN KETTERING

When one looks into their past, one might expect that doing so would be in the same chronological order of events as the passage of time around them. That is to say, that their past would be in the past. This, however, is not the case in regard to the man we know best as Cable. For his past is not only our past, but our future as well.

He was born Christopher Nathan Summers, named thus by his parents Scott Summers [See File: Cyclops] and Madelyne Pryor-Summers [See File: Goblin Queen]. As it turned out, our dear Maddie was a clone of the then presumed dead Jean Grey [See Files: Marvel Girl/Phoenix III and Phoenix I]. It was later revealed that it was Mister Sinister's [See File: Mister Sinister] goal to harness Scott and Jean's genetic potential through their offspring and thus he orchestrated several key events which helped lead to the birth of Nathan. [As he is now more commonly identified.] According to Sinister, the most powerful mutants will be birthed from the lineage of the Summers'.

From his birth, Cable never had it easy. He was hounded by Sinister's men, the Marauders [See File: Henchmen]. Later still, his own mother became the evil and twisted Goblin Queen and sought to sacrifice his very life in order to bring about a new demonic era on earth. And finally, Apocalypse [See File: Apocalypse] decided to test the young lad's resilience and worthiness by infecting him with a techno-organic virus. It was at this point that the enigmatic woman known only as Askani [See File: Askani Clan] appeared, offering the only choice for saving young Nathan's life. She would take him into the future. Cyclops and his mother Jean made the heart-wrenching decision to allow this, and thus lost their son in order to save him.

Tossed through time, Cable was apparently cloned immediately in hopes of saving him. However, Nathan proved he was indeed worthy as his own powers kicked in and kept the techno-organic virus, which had been ravaging his body, in check. Precious few moments later, using her celestial powers, Mother Askani [See File: Rachel Summers/Phoenix II/Mother Askani] transported Scott and Jean's minds into adopted bodies. There, they were able to raise Nathan for quite some time. However, Nathan's clone was quickly scooped up and raised by Apocalypse himself as an heir apparent. This clone would one day be known as Stryfe [See File: Stryfe].

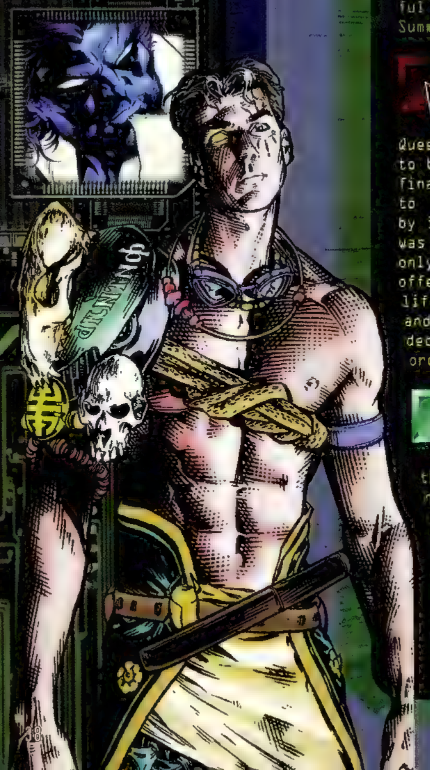
The complete details still elude me, as Jean and Scott remain tight-lipped about most of their experiences in this future. What little I do know suggests that Nathan was instrumental in bringing about the downfall of Apocalypse once and for all before Scott and Jean, there known as Slimm and Red Dayspring, returned to our era. What I have picked up piecemeal from Cable suggests that from that point onward he became an outlaw and began learning under the remaining members of the Askani Clan, becoming their chosen one, the Askani son. It is also known that he eventually married a woman who went by the adopted name of Jenskot, and I can only assume they had a son by the name of Tyler [See File: Genesis] who would tragically be turned towards a darkened path. His mission for quite some time was to battle the Canaanite forces of his own shattered reflection, Stryfe.

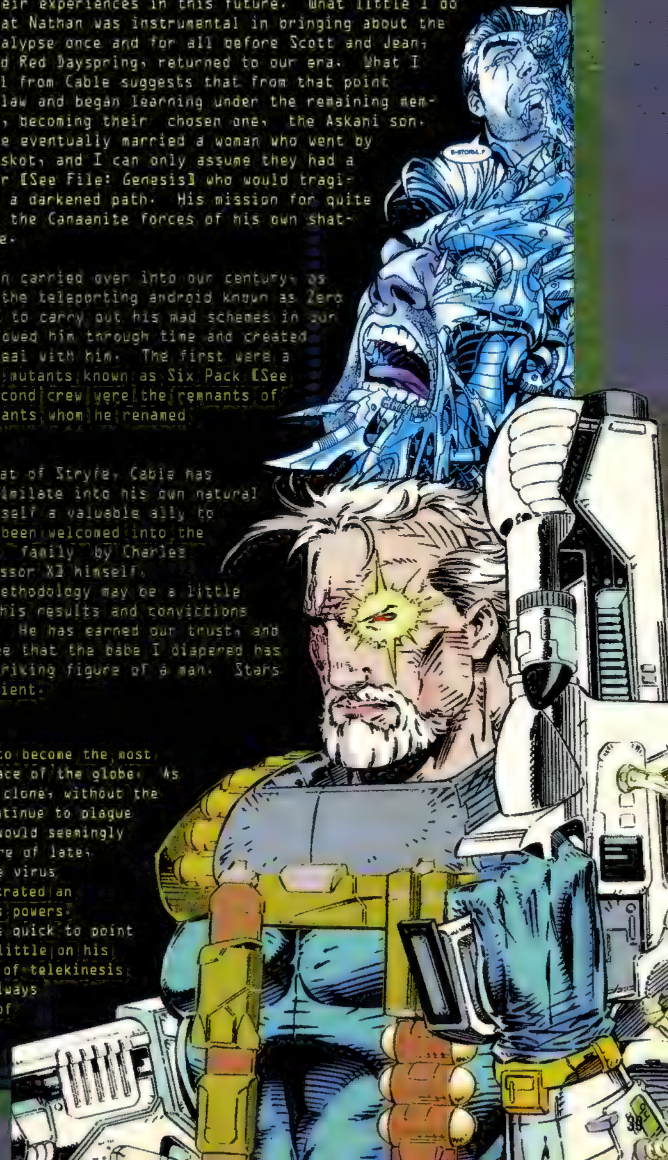
This mission soon carried over into our century, as Stryfe utilized the teleporting android known as Zero [See File: Zero] to carry out his mad schemes in our era. Cable followed him through time and created two sets of groups to deal with him. The first were a band of mercenaries and mutants known as Six Pack [See File: Six Pack]; the second crew were the remnants of the last of the New Mutants whom he renamed X-Force.

Since the eventual defeat of Stryfe, Cable has once again begun to assimilate into his own natural era. He has proven himself a valuable ally to the X-Men and has even been welcomed into the fold as a member of the "family" by Charles Xavier [See File: Professor X] himself. While his tactics and methodology may be a little questionable at times, his results and convictions remain solid and moral. He has earned our trust, and I for one am glad to see that the babe I diapered has grown up into such a striking figure of a man. Stars and garters, I feel ancient.

NOTES:

Cable has the potential to become the most powerful mutant on the face of the globe. As demonstrated through his clone, without the techno-organics which continue to plague him, his psionic powers would seemingly know no bounds. Yet, here of late, despite the fact that the virus continues, he has demonstrated an increasing mastery of his powers. However, Cable himself is quick to point out that he relies very little on his mutant psionic abilities of telekinesis and telepathy and will always consider his vast array of armaments from the future his weapons of choice.



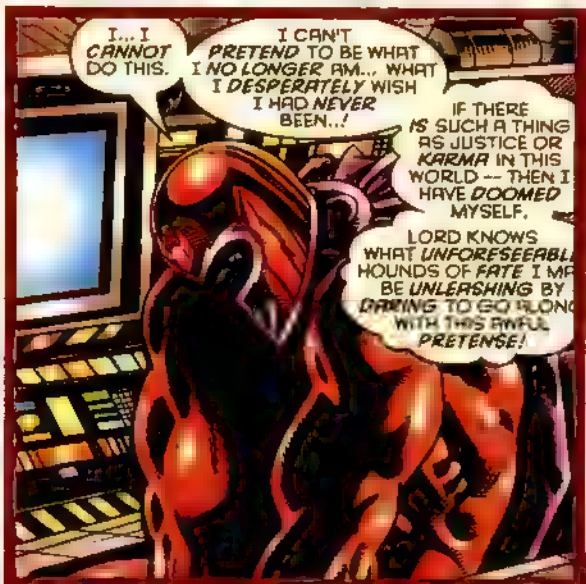


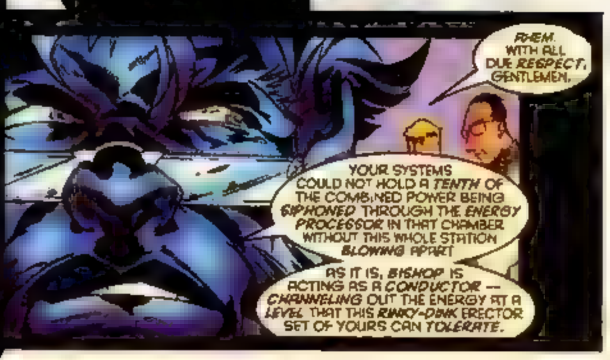
up and coming: Jorge Gonzalez

Welcome once again to "Up and Coming". This month's victim is Jorge Gonzalez, writer and rising superstar here at Marvel. *[Would you put a sock in it White, and get to the interview. I can't believe I agreed to let you do this again! How do I get suckered so easily.--Tim]* One word, personality! Man, I feel one of my spells coming on! MEDIC!

JW: Okay, Jorge, let's dance!
JG: WHAT?! Well okay, how 'bout a nice mambo?
JW: Cool, strange but cool! So tell us, Jorge, what made you decide to become a comic writer?
JG: "Star Wars" really influenced me to want to write. And when Marvel published the Star Wars comics, I was hooked. That got me going to comic stores all the time and I decided I wanted to make a living writing comics.
JW: I was told that you went to the Kubert School. Didn't you just tell us that you always wanted to be a comic writer?
JG: That's true but I went to study art. That isn't all the Kubert School teaches though. So I'm okay at coloring but my pencils are pretty frightening! I was only able to go for two years before I ran out of money. Then a friend of mine, Jose Delbo, got me an interview at Valiant Comics. This was the twist of fate I needed to get my foot in the door.
JW: What did you do for Valiant that helped you get work here at Mighty Marvel?
JG: I did a lot of everything for about five years. I started doing background inks at first, then I was given a chance to write and I did some editing. Then things went south and I was out of a job.
JW: You lived in Manhattan before Woodstock, where you live now. Why did you move?
JG: Well, first and foremost I was quite unemployed and the rent in New York was killer! There were also way too many distractions. Since I was home all day my friends would just drop by so I was distracted all too often and ended up goofing around too much. That's when I decided I needed an inexpensive place to live where I could be left in peace to do some work. A bud of mine let me crash at his place in Woodstock. I got back on my feet and decided to stay here; it's where I can work in peace and quiet. It really helps me to stay focused since I live out in the boonies!
JW: How did you get back on your feet? Was that when you started at Marvel?
JG: Yes, an editor at

jorge





Acclaim, formerly Valiant, Lynaire [Thompson], gave me some names to contact at Marvel. That's when Jaye Gardner, who was Kelly Corvese's assistant at the time, called me up. Kelly liked what I had done and asked me to write up a proposal for PROFESSOR XAVIER AND THE X-MEN. That was my start at Marvel.

JW: Was that good for you?

JG: Oh yeah! It was a combination of fanboy excitement and professional challenge. I had to retell great Lee-Kirby stories, which were over thirty pages long, in a space of only twenty-two pages. Then I had to update the stories without destroying what they had done. I miss that book, but I'm really having a blast with the stuff I'm working on now.

JW: Before we go there, what has been the biggest nightmare assignment you've had so far and why?

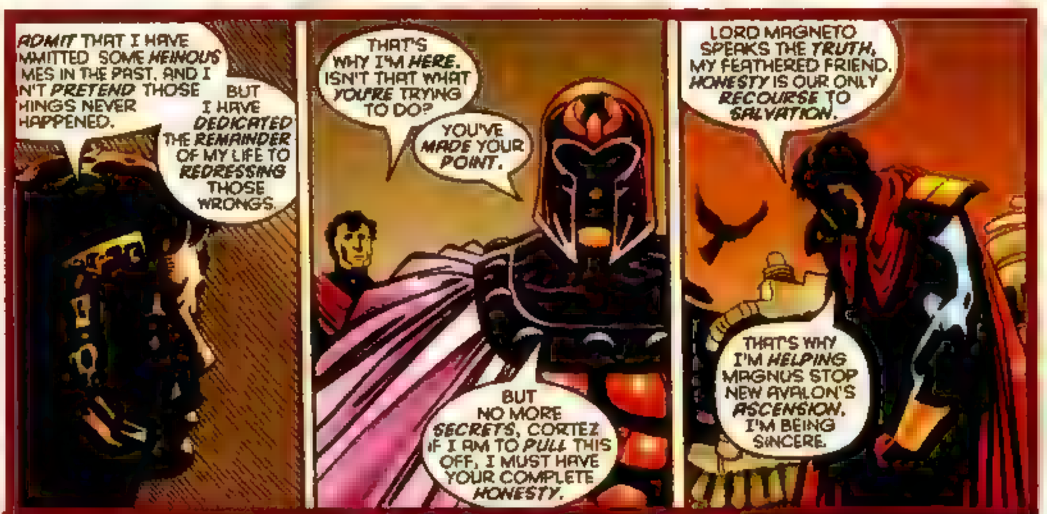
JG: Wow! That's a tough call. I don't think I'd use the word nightmare though. My hardest jobs were scripting UNLIMITED X-MEN #13 and the MAGNETO limited series. The reason UNLIMITED #13 was so tough was the time constraint on it. I had to script a ton of pages in a short amount of time. The MAGNETO limited series was tough because someone else was writing the plots. So I had no idea where the story was leading. I was never really sure how much to tell or how little. I was a reader scripting a book. It was a great exercise in learning to write on your toes. The mystery of what would happen really drove me to write. So I guess that one doesn't count.

JW: What influenced your writing besides Star Wars?

JG: Well, I guess it would be people like Agatha Christie, Jack Higgins, Ian Fleming and the James Bond stories. I also like some sci-fi and I'm a huge art history nut. Some of my ideas come from *National Geographic*. I was an English major so I read tons of stuff, far too much to list here.

JW: How did you develop your style of writing?

JG: I have no idea. My style isn't the same thing, ever. Every time I have to take a different angle. At Valiant we had all sorts of rules to follow, like no flashbacks, and no narrative captions plus some other rules I don't remember. It has been a while. Here at Marvel those rules don't apply. I have more creative freedom. As for the pace of my stories, most of the things I've worked on have been established characters. PROFESSOR XAVIER AND THE X-MEN and MYSTIQUE AND SABRETOOTH, they all had their secrets and pasts that could not be changed. Scripting MAGNETO was cool because it was character driven and I love stuff like that. Give me a hero with flaws and I'm in heaven. So I



gonza

by jason white

guess I'm more of a chameleon-like writer. I do what is necessary for the job at hand.
JW: Are there any characters that you'd like to work on?
JG: Not really. I've gotten a chance to work on the X-Men and that's what I wanted. It would be real cool to work on the classics like the Fantastic Four and the Avengers but I'm still the new guy so I guess I'll just have to wait. I would like to work on a story with the original Spider-Woman. I really want to write a strong female character. Maybe Misty Knight and Spider-Woman in some type of team-up story. Man, there are still so many characters I'd like to work on that I've been way too busy to really narrow it down.
JW: Who is or was your favorite artist to work with?
JG: You really like starting trouble! Right now I'm having a lot of fun with James Cheung. I think we'll gel really well even though we just started working together on the Maverick monthly series. I like Nick Gnazzo because he had the X-Men down pat. The mannerisms he drew into each character told you who they were even if they were just sitting around in a panel. So I really don't have a favorite artist. Each artist I've worked with adds something totally unique to that person that I liked. Working with Jim Calafiore on the Juggernaut WHAT IF?! was fun because we had worked together at Valiant. But I guess the more I see James Cheung's art the more I like it. There's a certain quality to it. Since MAVERICK is going to be somewhat gritty his artwork will be a great contrast. I really think it will liven up the book.
JW: So what's your favorite project so far?
JG: Right now I'm working on a SABRETOOTH One-Shot and the UNCANNY X-MEN ANNUAL but I guess my favorite would be MAVERICK.
JW: You said that Maverick is your favorite character; why?
JG: That's because I can make him into whoever I want. Maverick will be mine to establish and give history to. I can really develop him. There are no rules, he has hardly any back history, and he doesn't need to get back to the X-Mansion. I've got a ton of freedom so not only is it exciting but it will also be a tremendous challenge.
JW: You seem pretty fired up about Maverick so why don't you tell us about him and the book.
JG: YES! As you know Maverick has the Legacy Virus. So he's going to get a new lease on life; just how that happens I can't say. You'll just have to wait until the first week of July! He's going to have to figure out his niche in life now. With Operation: Zero Tolerance and the things that occurred during Onslaught, he's really going to have to work hard to hide who and what he is. I like the fact that he's a mutant that has never been under the influence of Professor Xavier's dream or Magneto's dream. He's always used his powers as a matter of survival and we are going to see what past events shaped his life into what it is. He's a mercenary and a loner. I want everyone to get a true sense for the character.
JW: So is this going to be a shoot-'em-up spy book?
JG: No. He's going to have two people to watch out for and somehow balance into his life. Elena Ivanovna will be his lifeline to the "new" world he's allowed into. He will also have to play a father figure role to Chris Bradley. This should create a huge dynamic since he is a loner at heart. Add to this all the people Maverick's angered over his long career as a spy and I think you've got one cool book.
JW: Will there be any new characters?
JG: Definitely. In the first issue we'll meet Hammer and Sickle, enforcers for the Russian Mob run by Ivan "the Terrible." We will also see the return of Omega Red. After all the things that took place in the MAVERICK One-Shot he has a huge score to settle with him. We'll also see Sabretooth, Elena has a score to settle with him and of course Wolverine, but he won't show up for a while.
JW: Before we wrap this up I just have to ask this. What do you do with your free time?
JG: Free time? What's that? I'm not sure. . .
JW: You know, when you're not writing comics.
JG: Oh yeah! I haven't had that in a while. I usually watch movies and party real hard. Free time is few and far between so partying real hard is a must.
JW: Thanks for sharing your free time with us!
JG: No problem.

Th-th-th-th-that's all, folks! *[Great, now he thinks he's a pig!]* MEDIC!

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- FAC X-Factor
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- JIM Journey Into Mystery
- ZAR Ka-Zar
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LARRY HAMA.... DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST MARVEL COMIC?

LARRY HAMA

IS THE QUINTESSENTIAL CREATIVE FORCE. LEAD VOCALIST AND GUITAR PLAYER IN A BLUES BAND. TELEVISION ACTOR (HE ONCE KIDNAPPED THE CHARACTER FRANK BURNS IN AN EPISODE OF M*A*S*H). TOY DESIGNER (OF THE KID-FAVE G.I. JOE THE TRUE AMERICAN HERO TOYS AND ANIMATED SERIES). HE APPEARED ON BROADWAY IN STEPHEN SONDHEIM'S "PACIFIC OVERTURES," IN WHICH HE ACTED, SANG AND EVEN DANCED. AND, OF COURSE, IS THE WRITER OF THE WORLD'S FAVORITE MEMBER OF THE X-MEN— WOLVERINE!

"I'LL START BY SAYING THAT I STILL HAVE EVERY COMIC I EVER BOUGHT. AND I WAS THERE WHEN THE FIRST OF MARVEL COMICS BEGAN. I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL AT THE TIME THE MARVEL 'REVOLUTION' BEGAN. 'COURSE, I WAS INTERESTED IN DRAWING BACK THEN. LIKE A LOT OF PEOPLE, I HAD GROWN TIRED AND JADED WITH HOW STUPID THINGS LIKE DC'S SUPERMAN'S PAL, JIMMY OLSEN HAD BECOME. AND WHEN THESE NEW COMICS CAME OUT, I WAS HOOKED JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.

"I SPECIFICALLY REMEMBER THE DITKO RUN OF SPIDER-MAN AND DR. STRANGE BEING SOME OF THE MOST AMAZING STUFF. AND THEN, OF COURSE, THERE WAS KIRBY...

"BUT I'D HAVE TO SAY MY FIRST MARVEL COMIC, AND I'M SORRY BECAUSE I DON'T EVEN KNOW THE ISSUE NUMBER OR THE TITLE OF THE BOOK, WAS A STORY BY STEVE DITKO ABOUT A GUY WHO GOES THROUGH THIS

STRANGE DIMENSIONAL GATEWAY INTO THIS WORLD FILLED WITH GOBLINS. THE GOBLINS HAD NO LEGS, JUST ROUNDED BOTTOMS AND THEY FLOATED ALL OVER THE PLACE.

"LIKE I SAID, THESE COMICS WERE TOTALLY DIFFERENT THAN ANYTHING ELSE. THE FACT THAT PETER PARKER HAD TO SIT UP IN HIS ATTIC AND SEW SHUT ALL THE HOLES IN HIS SPIDER-MAN COSTUME AFTER EVERY FIGHT WAS REALLY FUNNY.

"AND, EVEN THOUGH EVERYONE ALWAYS TALKED ABOUT HOW NEW AND EXCITING AND COOL ALL THE NEW MARVEL COMICS WERE, THERE WAS STUFF HERE THAT WAS TOTALLY ARCHAIC. I MEAN, I'VE NEVER MET ANYONE WHO DRESSED THE WAY FLASH THOMPSON DID. AND THOSE SWEATERS PETER WORE WERE RIGHT OUT OF THE '30S.

"BUT THE IMAGE OF WHAT THE MARVEL REVOLUTION WAS COULD BE SEEN IN AN ISSUE OF FANTASTIC FOUR. IT WAS IN 'THE BATTLE OF THE BAXTER BUILDING' AND FEATURED DR. DOOM AND DAREDEVIL."

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT FOR MARVEL?

"IT WAS G.I. JOE #1, I THINK. AND I ONLY GOT THE JOB AFTER EVERY OTHER PERSON WAS OFFERED IT AND HAD TURNED IT DOWN. WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD TURN INTO SUCH A SUCCESS? MY FIRST ART JOB HAS YET TO SEE PRINT AND PROBABLY WON'T EVER, EITHER. IT WAS AN 8-PAGE WEREWOLF STORY WRITTEN BY LARRY LIEBER [SEE NEXT ISSUE FOR MORE ON MR. LIEBER.—TIM] AND INKED BY THE LEGENDARY NEAL ADAMS."

There are way too many people in this world who never get what they deserve. You know the type: hardworking, talented, and too modest to step into the spotlight. Well, no more. Because it's time to bring you yet another one of—

MARVEL'S UNSUNG HEROES

Real Name: Steve Buccellato (A.K.A. 'The Bucce')
Date of Birth: 5/10/68
Occupation: Colorist (currently on UNCANNY X-MEN), Supreme Emperor of TEAM BUCCE!
First Appeared in Marvel Universe: Assisting Kyle Baker on HOWARD THE DUCK Limited Series
Base of Operations: Venice, California
Real Identity: Multi-media mogul
Known Confidants: Marc Siry, Klaus Janson, Marie Javins, David Wohl, AnneLouise Mahoney, Trish Hale
Major Enemies: Plaque
Hero Status Verification: Has contributed to over 500 Marvel Comics publications

How long have you been working in comics?

Since about 1985. I started as an intern and then became John Romita's assistant. After that, I worked on the editorial staff at Epic Comics before going freelance full time.

Why coloring?

That's a question I ask myself every day (laughs). Actually, it was sort of by accident. Coloring isn't as time consuming as penciling or inking—two mediums which I also planned to pursue while still on staff at Epic. Then when I went freelance, more and more people offered me coloring jobs. Eventually it took over my life!

How has coloring changed since your first day in the industry?

In the past, the colorist would create a color guide for a separator who would actually cut and paste the film by hand. But now with the help of computers, you can drop in colors and gradients with much more accuracy and creativity. This allows colorists like myself to do our own separations. I can even skip the color guides and go to work directly on the computer files.

What's your favorite color?

Green, currently. A nice 'C100 M30 Y60' really gets me going.

After working on numerous titles, which run are you most proud of?

I'd have to say the past year of UNCANNY X-MEN. I really like coloring Joe Madureira's art. Most popular artists today use a lot of detail and although that approach certainly has its place, it's not as interesting for me to color. Personally, I'm more interested in mood. I like coloring creepy night scenes and strange light sources. Joe's simple and open style lets me have some fun with that.

What has been your favorite experience at the House of Ideas?

Although I really enjoy freelancing, I miss the creative collaboration I experienced as a member of the editorial staff. It was great to put together creative teams and work with them throughout the whole process. I guess in that way I'm a megalomaniac, I like to have my hands in all the action.

What other accomplishments do you aspire to?

Ironically, I'd like to write and draw a black and white comic book.

Who are some of your heroes?

Jacques Tardi, Klaus Janson, Paul Grist, Martin Scorsese (director), Jim Thompson (author), and Walter Mosley (author).

—Robert Piotrowski

Around the Office starring GEORGE ROUSSOS

Without a doubt, George Roussos knows comics. With over fifty years in the business, no one dares dispute it. Not to mention the giants that he worked right alongside of: Robert Ripley; Bob Kane; Jack Kirby; Joe Simon and of course, Stan Lee, as well as so many others. He worked on such titles as: CAPTAIN AMERICA, FANTASTIC FOUR, BATMAN, THE PHANTOM, FLASH GORDON, FELIX THE CAT and THE LONE RANGER. Suffice it to say, George Roussos knows what he's doing, straight down the line, and Marvel is lucky to have him for our very own.

(GR) I practiced and practiced. I wanted to get into the industry, so I wrote to many of the syndicated newspapers and landed a job with Bob Ripley. I was doing art corrections for "Believe It or Not" for Spanish-speaking countries and getting paid peanuts. I used to sign Ripley's autograph for all the books because I could imitate his signature so accurately.

(GR) Because I knew the medium so well at that point I got a job at DC. Sixty or so artists, better than me, applied for a position but because of my past experience I got the job. They didn't want to teach somebody in the middle of meeting a deadline.

(GR) I was doing lettering and backgrounds for Batman. I did that for approximately four years and then I continued working (inking) on other titles.

(GR) Inky came from Bob Wood. He made me into a villain named Inky for one of his stories. After that, everyone kept calling me that, although never did I know how it originated, they simply thought it had to do with my being an inker.

(GR) Originally I was inking Captain America for Stan on a freelance basis. For years, I did freelance work for Marvel while working on staff at DC. In 1972, Stan Lee brought me on staff at Marvel as an inker, but when Marie Severin didn't want to color covers anymore, Stan asked me to take over. Which is what I am still doing today. Stan liked my work because I had the same drama that he did. I dealt directly with him. No one else.

(LMR)

(GR) It was a smaller outfit, less people and with a singular direction. Stan was a terrific leader. I used to call him the symbol of the sun. He gave off a lot of energy. We'd all be half asleep and he'd come in and before you knew it, everything was radiating, left to right. He was a dynamo, knowing exactly what he wanted. Jack Kirby was a quiet man. Amazingly talented, he just sat in the Bullpen, giving his all.

(LMR)

(GR) I like Hal Foster, who did Prince Valiant, and Chester Gould, a.k.a Dick Tracy. I like Gould because of his simplicity, very direct, and he's an excellent storyteller.

(GR) I enjoyed working with Seymour Barry who did The Phantom, and Dan Barry who did Flash Gordon. Jack Small and I worked together in England on pirate adventures and westerns. He was my intellectual companion. There were many others but those few stand out.

(GR) When I came back from England, I was working for DC and I wanted to do some freelance work for Stan Lee. So I used the name George Bell. I went on to give myself many other names over the years, until Jim Shooter, Editor in Chief of Marvel at the time, asked me to use my real name from then on.

(GR) When you take comics seriously, then you become dead. After all, it is a mad medium.

1973

PART 1: THE SILVER AGE ENDS

Anyone interested in the world of comics might think of it as a place where, in contrast with the real world, stability reigns. The great comics characters live on, eternally youthful, for decades even as their fans age from childhood into adulthood. The readers of Marvel's "Silver Age" comics of the 1960s saw the Marvel revolution's greatest architects, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko, and even Stan Lee himself, moved on to other projects, but the characters they had created went on, entrusted to a new generation of writers and artists. The more things changed, the more things stayed the same.

1973 proved them wrong. It provided the proof that the Silver Age was dead, that a new generation was in charge of Marvel, a new decade was well underway, and comics were heading in a new, darker direction. Kurt Busiek and Alex Ross's MARVELS pinpointed the event that took place in the Marvel of 1973 spelling the end of an age of innocence in super hero comics. Photojournalist Phil Sheldon, the all-too-human protagonist of that revolutionary book, realized to his shock, 1973 was the year that Gwen Stacy died.

It happened in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #121 in a story by writer Gerry Conway and artist Gil Kane. Norman Osborn had once more reverted to his insane alternate personality of the original Green Goblin, who also knew Spider-Man's true identity. As the Goblin he captured Parker's girlfriend, Gwen, and took her to the top of one of New York City's most famous bridges. (Exactly which bridge it was is a matter of dispute. Conway's text refers to it as the George Washington Bridge, but Kane clearly drew the Brooklyn Bridge. Since comics is a visual medium, I prefer to go with the Brooklyn Bridge, but confusion has persisted as to which bridge it was throughout three decades of flashbacks to Gwen's death.)

Before the arriving Spider-Man's eyes, the Goblin pushed Gwen off the bridge. Swinging down, Spider-Man caught Gwen with his webbing—to the accompaniment of a loud snapping sound. He found her dead.

And here is another point of dispute. Yes, clearly, the Green Goblin bore the responsibility for Gwen's death, and Conway's script states that it was "the shock of the fall" that killed Gwen. But, as Phil Sheldon's reaction in MARVELS hints, it is also possible to believe that the snapping sound was not made by the webbing as it caught Gwen. What if the sudden shock of her fall being stopped broke her neck? What if Spider-Man had unintentionally caused her death?

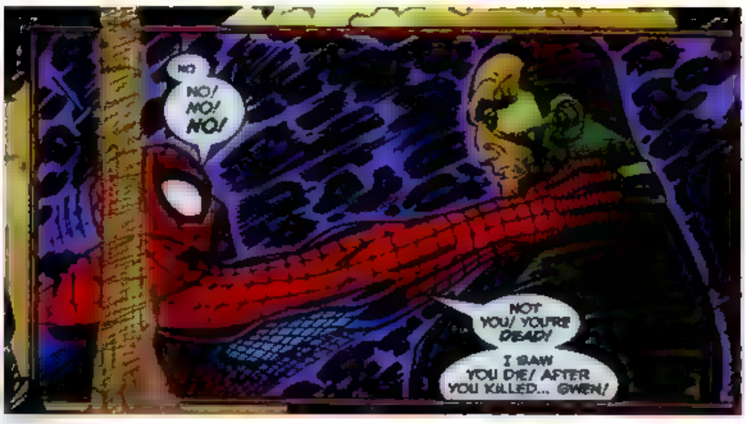
In any event, Spider-Man was torn by anguish and guilt, having lost the first woman he truly loved. He blamed himself for failing to save her and even for putting her in danger in the first place, since the Goblin killed her to get revenge on him.

Even today, thankfully, Spider-Man abides by the moral code of the heroes of the Silver Age. Issue #121 ends with his vowing vengeance on the Goblin, and, indeed, in the next issue Spider-Man defeats him in furious combat. But Spider-Man will not take the Goblin's life. That job is seemingly left to fate: the Goblin's glider, damaged in the battle, impales him, leaving him apparently dead.

As far as readers were concerned for over twenty years thereafter, the original Goblin was dead. There also seemed to be an unspoken rule in comics back then that the killer of a major character must die (usually through accident) and stay dead, not to be revived by subsequent writers. Hence, Baron Heinrich Zemo (who killed Captain America's partner Bucky) and the Burglar who murdered Peter Parker's Uncle Ben have never been resurrected (or, in the Baron's case, not permanently!).

Instead, Conway immediately began setting up a new Green Goblin. Peter Parker's friend and roommate, Harry Osborn, the Goblin's son, had already been established as a victim of drug addiction. Readers soon learned that Norman Osborn's body had been stripped of the Green Goblin costume before the police found it. Inevitably, both the police and J. Jonah Jameson suspected Spider-Man of killing Osborn. Eventually, readers would find out that it was Harry who stole the costume, and Harry, crazed by drugs and grief, would become the new Green Goblin to take revenge on Spider-Man.

Harry is now dead, and only last year, seeking a major villain to blame for the entire Spider-Clone scenario, the Spider-Man editors decided to resurrect the original Green Goblin. What saved his life was a super-power no one had heard of until Wolverine came along: the notorious "fast healing" ability. It



was decided by writers after the original Goblin's death that the chemical formula that had driven him mad had also endowed him with superhuman strength; in 1996 it was also decided the formula enabled him to recover from even seemingly mortal injury. And so Norman had woken up in the morgue, and even today, bears a nasty scar on his chest. (What, hasn't he heard of plastic surgery?)

The death of Gwen had other far-ranging repercussions. Conway later revealed that Peter Parker's biology teacher, Professor Miles Warren (a character actually created by Lee and Ditko), had been obsessed with Gwen and blamed Spider-Man for her death. Warren would go on to plague Spider-Man in his costumed identity of the Jackal and create the notorious Spider-Man clone, Ben Reilly, who returned two decades later and proclaimed himself the real Spider-Man until his demise last year. [PETER PARKER: SPIDER-MAN #75.—Tim]

Most significantly, Gwen's demise cleared the way for a more prominent role for Mary Jane Watson, then the series' secondary female lead, in Peter Parker's life.

When they finally brought Mary Jane on stage, Stan Lee and John Romita Sr. had played with the idea of making her Peter's girlfriend, but they ultimately paired him with Gwen, who had evolved into a conventional young lead ingenue: beautiful, loving, more demure than the aggressively sexy Mary Jane, and free from any character flaws. Mary Jane, however appealing as a free spirit, was portrayed as somewhat flighty, unthinkingly toying with the affections of the emotionally unstable Harry.

But when Peter returned to his apartment after Gwen's demise, he found Mary Jane waiting for him. This was significant: slowly over the rest of the first of his terms as Spider-Man writer, Conway nudged Peter and Mary Jane towards a romance.

This first effort to bring Peter and Mary Jane together did not last. There would be a long period in the 1980s when Mary Jane was absent from the series, and when she returned she was not intended to be a serious romantic interest for Peter. Years later Tom DeFalco and Ron Frenz showed how her party girl personality was merely the facade through which she tried to compensate for her unhappy life with her family. DeFalco and Frenz merely wanted to turn Mary Jane into Peter's confidante, but by giving her a more fully developed personality, they made it possible for her to become the series' leading lady and ultimately Peter's wife.

Gwen was an idealized girlfriend, but Mary Jane proved over time to have a more complicated and intriguing personality, and one that, as Conway showed in his 1980s graphic novel PARALLEL LIVES, resembled Peter's own. Perhaps that is why Gwen remained the unattainable dream, but Mary Jane became the woman Peter actually ended up marrying.

Perhaps the most important result of Gwen's death, though, was to mark a change in the attitude of Marvel stories. In part Gwen's death was in the Marvel tradition that Stan Lee had established. Other important supporting characters had already died in Silver Age stories: Junior Juniper in SGT. FURY, and even Gwen's own father. This was not even the first Marvel leading lady to perish: there had been Nick Fury's wartime love, Lady Pamela Hawley, and even the Sub-Mariner's longtime paramour Lady Dorma.

But this was different. This was the girlfriend of Marvel's leading solo star. Her death was Marvel's equivalent of killing off Lois Lane. Such a thing was not supposed to happen in super hero stories: no matter how often the girlfriend was endangered, the hero always rescued her. But now the happy ending was no longer guaranteed. The

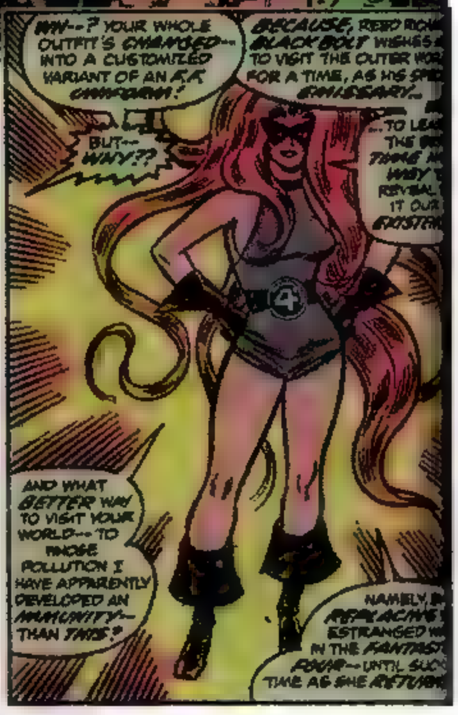
tone of Marvel's stories—and super hero stories in general, no matter what company published them—did not change radically overnight, but the genre had started on its path to a darker and more dangerous world.

Marvel continued its exploration of the horror genre in *Amazing Spider-Man* #124, when J. Jonah Jameson's son John, then still an astronaut, discovered a strange gem on the moon. The Moongem affixed itself to his neck and under a full moon transformed him into the creature dubbed the Man-Wolf. Just as Morbius had been turned into a vampire-like being by scientific means, so too the Man-Wolf was not a true supernatural werewolf, like Marvel's Werewolf by Night. At present John is free of his transformations into the Man-Wolf, but they were to haunt him for many years to come.

And then, in issue #126, came the perpetrators of horror of a different kind. Their names were Carter and Lombardo, and they were the creators of something that fills readers from the Seventies with horror to this day. If you started reading comics after that, and do not wish to be exposed to the knowledge of this nightmare, then skip the next paragraph.

Carter and Lombardo created the Spider-Mobile. By now Marvel had gotten so popular it was making merchandising deals, and apparently somebody thought, hey, Batman's got the Batmobile, so why couldn't Spider-Man have a Spider-Mobile that we could turn into a toy? And so the Spider-Mobile was introduced into the comic book. To Marvel's credit, though, it was partly treated as a source of humor, since Spider-Man didn't know how to drive. See, he grew up in New York, where there's plenty of public transportation and so much traffic most people don't bother with a car. Mind you, some readers wrote in to ask how come Spidey couldn't drive a car when Stan had Peter Parker driving a motorcycle. Hmm. The short answer is that Marvel had royally screwed up. Eventually, Marvel's writers got fed up with the Spider-Mobile and wrecked it, but, oh, did we have to suffer in the meantime. [For more on the Spider-Mobile see VISION #1.—Historian Tim.]

The status quo received a temporary but resounding shake-up from Roy Thomas over in THE FANTASTIC FOUR. Marital tensions led Susan Richards not only to leave her husband Reed, but also to quit the Fantastic Four. Two issues later the remaining Fantastic Three found an unexpected



replacement: their former adversary, the Inhuman Medusa, who remained with the team for a considerable period thereafter.

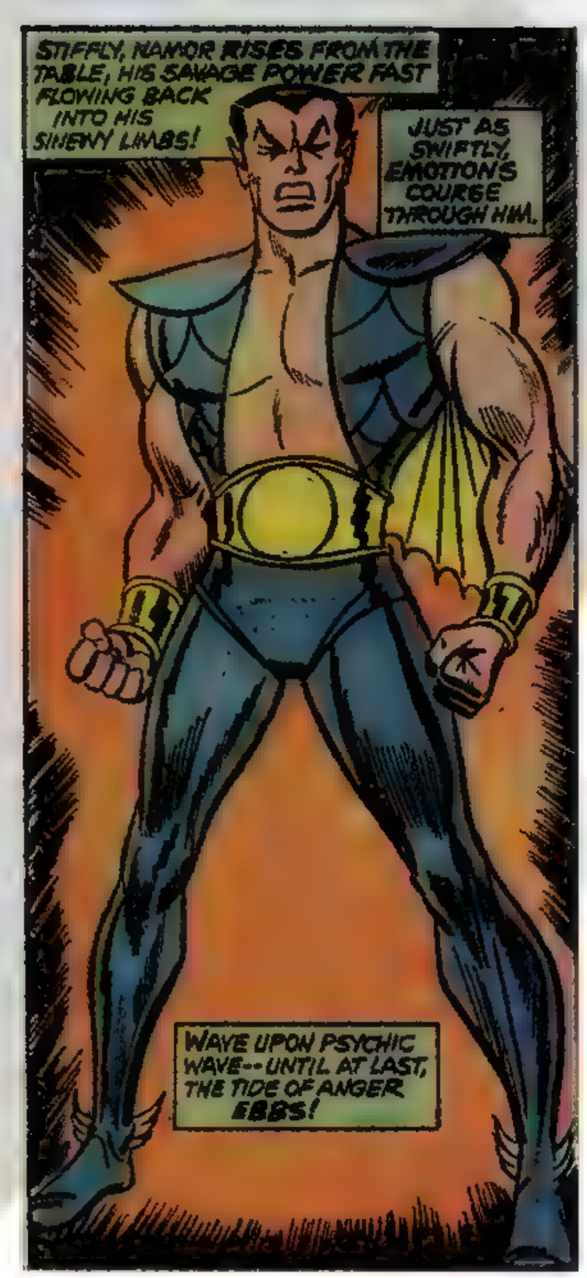
Just as THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN gave rise to MARVEL TEAM-UP, which paired the web-slinger with guest stars, so Marvel decided to try the same tactic with the Thing. They tried out the format

with MARVEL FEATURE Vol. 2 #1, in which another new Marvel writer, Len Wein, partnered Ben Grimm with his frequent sparring partner, the Hulk, against the unlikely team of the Hulk's archenemy, the Leader, and Kurrgo, Master of Planet X. Who, you ask? Well, Kurrgo was the alien villain in FANTASTIC FOUR #7, and readers were quickly learning that the new wave of writers even would bring back characters Lee and Kirby had created but had never wanted to use again! No one has bothered with bringing back Kurrgo since MARVEL FEATURE, but the Thing team-ups proved successful enough to begin appearing the following

year in their own series, MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE.

Thor spent most of the year battling aliens in his series, but the January issue, number #207, which would actually have gone on sale several months earlier, marks the very first—and unofficial—Marvel-DC crossover! Back in the early 1970s there was an annual Halloween parade held in the small town of Rutland, Vermont, which was notable for the number of comics fans who showed up dressed as super heroes and super- villains. Keep in mind that these were the days before comics specialty shops or widespread comics conventions, so a fan event like this was something unusual. A number of the new young comics professionals headed out to Rutland at Halloween, and Roy Thomas introduced the parade, Rutland's leading comics fan Tom Fagan, and himself as a spectator into the Marvel Universe in AVENGERS #83 in 1970.

THOR #207 found three young writers attending the parade while the thunder god did battle with Loki elsewhere in Rutland. One of the writers was Gerry Conway, author of the Thor story. The second was Steve Englehart, who wrote the trio into AMAZING ADVENTURES #16, which found the Beast fighting the Juggernaut that same night in Rutland. And the third writer was Len Wein, who put the authorial trio into a tale set that same night in Rutland—over in JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA #103! What's more, if you read all three issues, it all fit together as one story!



1973 witnessed yet another sign of generational change, as Golden Age artist Bill Everett did his final issue of the book starring his own 1939 creation, SUB-MARINER #63. The most memorable of his issues that year, however, was number #57, in which Namor encountered an Everett creation from the 1950s, his version of the goddess Venus, who, like Marvel's Thor, could assume mortal form at will.

Yet another new Marvel recruit, Steve Gerber, had been scripting Everett's SUB-MARINER issues that year, and he stayed on as writer afterwards. But the book's sales were falling, and in an effort to make Namor look more like a conventional super hero, Marvel outfitted him in a black costume designed by John Romita Sr. The rationale in the story was that Namor had lost his ability to breathe air, and his former foe Reed Richards had created a costume enabling him to do so.

It is too bad more people were not reading SUB-MARINER, because they were also missing its memorable new backup series, "Tales of Atlantis." It was a chronicle of the final days of Atlantis up to and including the Great Cataclysm that sank it beneath the waves. It was, in effect, a sword and sorcery series, with science fiction substituting for magic, centering on the warrior king Kamuu and his equally brave and formidable swordswoman wife Zartra. The series was also a sign of things to come, since it was a collaboration of Gerber with another new talent, artist Howard Chaykin.

In this chapter of the Marvel Chronicles, I have concentrated on the more conventional Marvel series of 1973. In the Spider-Man and Sub-Mariner of 1973 we see signposts marking the passing of the last traces of the Golden and Silver Ages. In our next chapter we will turn our attention to the fireworks being set off elsewhere in the Marvel Universe by a new breed of comics writer: Steve Englehart's AVENGERS, Marv Wolfman's TOMB OF DRACULA, Steve Gerber's MAN-THING, and so many more.

—Peter Sanderson

HEROES

ON SALE JULY 2

DAREDEVIL NO.367
JOE KELLY/GENE COLAN
FEATURING THE CUTTING-EDGE CONCLUSION TO THE GLADIATOR STORY ARC! DAREDEVIL'S AT THE MERCY OF MR. FEAR AND THE NEW GLADIATOR EXCEPT "MERCY" ISN'T IN THIS FEARSOME DUO'S VOCABULARY! BUT DON'T STOP THERE, FOLLOW OL' HORN HEAD AS HE LEAPS INTO ACTION IN ELEKTRA #10 AND DAREDEVIL/DEADPOOL '97!

THE FANTASTIC FOUR NO.11
JIM LEE & BRANDON CHOI/BRETT BOOTH/TOM MCWEENEY
SILVER SURFER! FIRELORD! TERRAX! THREE MYSTERIOUS HERALDS DESCEND UPON EARTH PREPARING THE WAY FOR THEIR MASTER GALACTUS, DEVOURER OF WORLDS! IS THIS THE BEGINNING OF THE END FOR HEROES REBORN?!

HERCULES AND THE HEART OF CHAOS NO.2 (OF 3)
TOM DEFALCO/RON FRENZ/PAT OLLIFFE
CONTINUING THE PRINCE OF POWER'S ALL-NEW LIMITED SERIES! NOW THAT ARES AND HIS WARHAWKS POSSESS THE MYTHOLOGICAL HEART OF CHAOS (THE ARTIFACT WITH THE POWER TO REGRESS THE WORLD BACK TO THE DARK AGES), THE STILL-MORTAL HERCULES MUST TEAM WITH S.H.I.E.L.D. TO TRACK ARES TO HIS LAIR BUT TO ENTER, THEY'LL HAVE TO GET PAST THE SNORTIN' MAD MINOTAUR! AND, ALL THE WHILE, A TRAITOR AMONG THEM PLOTS THEIR DESTRUCTION!

KA-ZAR NO.5
MARK WAID/ANDY KUBERT/JESSE DELPERDANG
JUST WHEN KA-ZAR THOUGHT HE'D LEFT THE JUNGLE BEHIND, HE HAS TO TAKE ON A WHOLE NEW ANIMAL WHEN THE RAMBUNCTIOUS RHINO RUMBLES IN! PLUS: MORE ON PARNIVAL'S MYSTERIOUS ALLY, WHILE KA-ZAR AND SHANNA SET UP SHOP IN NEW YORK CITY!

UNCANNY ORIGINS NO.13
STARRING DOCTOR STRANGE
LEN WEIN/MARC CAMPOS
BY THE HOARY HOSTS OF HOGARTH, IT'S A MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR THROUGH THE LIFE OF THE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS! HOW DID A SELFISH, LIQUOR-SWILLING SURGEON BECOME DOCTOR STRANGE, SORCERER SUPREME? THE ALL-SEEING EYE OF AGAMOTTO WILL REVEAL ALL IN THIS BARGAIN-PRICED, READER-FRIENDLY ISSUE!

ON SALE JULY 9

AVENGERS NO.11
WALT SIMONSON/MICHAEL RYAN/SALEEM CRAWFORD
IS THIS THE AVENGERS' DARKEST HOUR?! IT'S AVENGER VS. AVENGER AS FORMER TEAMMATES AND FRIENDS GO HEAD-TO-HEAD IN A FIGHT TO THE FINISH! BUT WHO ARE THE REAL AVENGERS, AND WILL ANY OF THEM SURVIVE TO FACE THE FIEND THAT'S WAITING IN THE WINGS, THE TRICKSTER GOD, LOKI?!

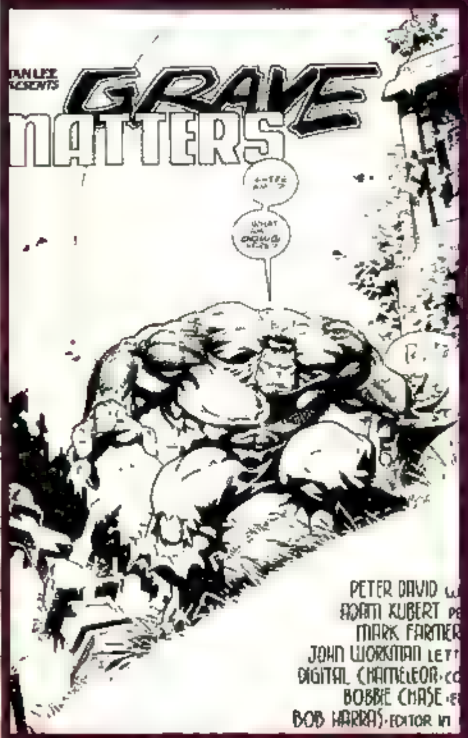
DAREDEVIL/DEADPOOL '97
JOE KELLY/BERNARD CHANG/JOHN HOLDREDGE
IT'S DAREDEVIL, IT'S DEADPOOL, IT'S TWO ANNUALS IN ONE! THAT'S RIGHT, FRANTIC ONE, THIS 48-PAGE SPECIAL POURS STORY ELEMENTS FROM BOTH ONGOING SERIES INTO A BLENDER AND HITS PUREE! TYPHOID MARY, THAT SCHIZOID SWEETIE FROM DAREDEVIL'S PAST, RETURNS TO HER OLD STOMPING GROUNDS TO EXACT REVENGE ON EVERYONE WHO'S EVER SCREWED HER OVER, INCLUDING DD! NOW DEADPOOL'S ON HER TAIL, BUT WHOSE SIDE IS HE ON? AND YOU MUST NOT MISS THE SUBPLOT FEATURING THE MOST POPULAR SUPPORTING CAST MEMBER OF THEM ALL, DUECE THE DEVIL DOG!

GHOST RIDER NO.88
Ivan Velez Jr./Josh Hood/Jason Martin

WHEN THE GHOST RIDER FAILS TO SAVE AN INNOCENT LIFE, HIS ACTIONS TRIGGER THE CREATION OF PAO FU, THE CHINESE SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE! MEANWHILE, BLACKHEART CONTINUES TO MANIPULATE HIS HUMAN CHESS PIECES, MANEUVERING THEM INTO POSITION TO DESTROY GR!

THE GOLDEN AGE OF MARVEL
TRADE PAPERBACK
Painted cover by Ray Lago
VARIOUS

THE GREATEST STORIES OF MARVEL'S GOLDEN AGE, COLLECTED IN ONE VOLUME! THIS NEW SOFTCOVER TRADE PAPERBACK FEATURES 176 PAGES OF CLASSIC TALES BY CREATIVE GIANTS SUCH AS **STAN LEE, JOE SIMON, BILL EVERETT, JOHN ROMITA, JACK KIRBY**-FEATURING 100 PAGES OF RESEPARATED COLOR! JOURNEY INTO MARVEL'S PULSE-POUNDING PAST AND WITNESS CAPTAIN AMERICA VS. THE RED SKULL, THE HUMAN TORCH VS. SUB-MARINER AND MORE! STARRING THE ALL-WINNERS SQUAD, THE VISION, THE BLONDE PHANTOM, THE BLACK KNIGHT, VENUS, THE DESTROYER, MARVEL BOY AND MORE! PLUS: A SCHOLARLY INTRODUCTION BY PREEMINENT MARVEL HISTORIAN, ROY THOMAS!



JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY NO.512
Tom DeFalco/Ed Benes

THE LOST GODS ARE RESTORED TO THEIR FORMER GLORY IN THIS, OUR PENULTIMATE ISSUE! ODIN BEGINS HIS FINAL SHOWDOWN WITH SETH AS THE FATE OF THE WORLD ASH AND LIFE ITSELF, HANGS IN THE BALANCE! MEANWHILE, ONLY ONE PERSON STANDS BETWEEN RED NORVELL AND THOR'S HAMMER, AND HIS NAME IS VINCENT STARWIT, THE GARGANTUAN GOURMET?! AND IF THAT'S NOT ENOUGH, HOW ABOUT CAMEOS BY DOCTOR STRANGE AND THE SILVER SURFER?!

MARVEL ADVENTURES NO.6
STARRING SPIDER-MAN, THE INVISIBLE WOMAN & THE HUMAN TORCH
Ralph Macchio/Ben Herrera

SPIDEY TEAMS WITH THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S SUPER SIBLINGS, THE INVISIBLE WOMAN AND THE HUMAN TORCH! DANTE'S PEAK WILL LOOK LIKE A PIMPLE IF THE SUBTERRANEAN LAVA MEN HAVE THEIR WAY! NOW THE WONDROUS WEB-SLINGER MUST JOIN FORCES WITH SUE AND JOHNNY TO SAVE NEW YORK CITY, OTHERWISE, THE COAST IS TOAST! IT'S A CROSS-POLLINATION OF YOUR FAVORITE CARTOON STARS IN AN ALL-NEW COMIC!

ON SALE JULY 16

HEROES FOR HIRE NO.3
John Ostrander/Pascual Ferry/Jaime Mendoza

IT'S AN ALL-OUT RAMPAGE ON WALL STREET AS THE HEROES WAGE FINAL BATTLE AGAINST NITRO, WITH THE ALL-NEW, ALL-COOL BLACK KNIGHT RIDING IN TO PLAY CALVALRY! PLUS: MORE ON THE MYSTERY OF THE NEW WHITE TIGER! A TEAM MEMBER LEAVES AS ANOTHER JOINS! AND IS THE MASTER REALLY LURING LUKE CAGE OVER TO THE DARK SIDE?

THE INCREDIBLE HULK NO.456
Peter David/Adam Kubert/Mark Farmer

GUEST-STARRING APOCALYPSE! EN-SABAH-NUR, THE SCURGE OF THE X-MEN, TAKES THE HULK WITH THE INTENTION OF MAKING HIM ONE OF HIS HORSEMEN! AND IF THE DEAL MEANS THAT HULK CAN REGAIN BANNER, HE MIGHT JUST TAKE BIG A UP ON HIS HEINOUS OFFER!

HEROES

IRON MAN NO.11
JEPH LOEB/RYAN BENJAMIN

FINALLY, THE TRUE FACE BEHIND HYDRA IS REVEALED, MUCH TO THE SURPRISE OF EVERYONE INCLUDING MADAME HYDRA! MEANWHILE, IRON MAN HAS HIS HANDS FULL TRYING TO KEEP HIS FRIENDS, HIS EMPIRE AND HIS LIFE FROM CRUMBLING APART. TO SAVE ALL HE HOLDS DEAR, THE ARMORED AVENGER MUST FINALLY FACE HIS FORMER FRIEND AND FEARSOME FOE, DR. DOOM!

THUNDERBOLTS NO.6
KURT BUSIEK/MARK BAGLEY/VINCE RUSSELL

LOVE BLOSSOMS AMONG THE THUNDERBOLTS BUT WILL CITIZEN V ALLOW IT TO SURVIVE? BUT THERE'S BIGGER TROUBLE IN MANHATTAN, AS THE ELEMENTS OF DOOM ALL 105 OF THEM, TAKE OVER THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING! HOW CAN THE T-BOLTS TRIUMPH OVER A VERITABLE ARMY OF SUPER-VILLAINS?!

ON SALE JULY 23

CAPTAIN AMERICA NO.11
JAMES ROBINSON/JOE BENNETT/SANDRA HOPE

CAP'S FOUR-ISSUE ODYSSEY ACROSS AMERICA BATTLING THE SONS OF THE SERPENT COMES TO ITS CHAOTIC CONCLUSION IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL, WASHINGTON D.C.! THERE THE LEADER OF THE SOCIETY IS REVEALED AN EVENT THAT LEADS DIRECTLY INTO THE FANTASTIC FINALE OF THE HEROES REBORN SAGA!

ELEKTRA NO.10
PETER MILLIGAN/MIKE DEODATO JR./DEODATO STUDIOS

AT LONG LAST, ELEKTRA COLLIDES WITH DAREDEVIL! IN PART 1 OF "AMERICAN SAMURAI", ELEKTRA IS DRAWN TO THE SCENE OF A GRUESOME CRIME AND SO IS HER EX-LOVER, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR! BUT WHEN A VIGILANTE STRIKES DOWN THE CULPRITS, MATT AND ELEKTRA MUST PUT ASIDE THEIR PAST TO STOP HIS PATH OF RAGE. BUT WHEN HONOR, FATE AND PASSION COLLIDE, WILL MARVEL'S MOST COMBUSTIBLE COUPLE DETONATE ONCE AGAIN?!

MARVEL VISION NO.22

GET THE BEHIND-THE-SCENE LOWDOWN ON "HEROES RETURN"! THIS 64-PAGE, FULL-COLOR, COMIC-SIZED INFO-FEST IS PACKED WITH ARTICLES ON UPCOMING PROJECTS, INTERVIEWS WITH TOP CREATORS LIKE THE LEGENDARY ROY THOMAS, NEAT FEATURES LIKE "TIME SLIP" AND FULL LISTINGS COVERING MARVEL PRODUCTS ON SALE THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER.

ON SALE JULY 30

DEADPOOL NO.8
JOE KELLY/ED MCGUINNESS/NATHAN MASSENGILL

CONTINUED FROM DAREDEVIL/DEADPOOL '97! RICOCHETING RIGHT OUT OF THAT CRAZY ANNUAL, WADE AND TYPHOID MARY RETURN TO BOSTON, SITE OF ALL THAT ACTION FROM THE DEADPOOL FLASHBACK ISSUE! PLUS: MORE ON THE MYSTERY OF THAT FREAKY GUY, GERRY!

CONAN NO.3 (OF 3)
ROLAND GREEN/CLAUDIO CASTELLINI

CROM'S #1 SON CONCLUDES HIS ALL-NEW THREE-ISSUE LIMITED SERIES! FEATURING THE MIND-BLOWING, EYE-POPPING ART OF MARVEL VERSUS DC'S CLAUDIO CASTELLINI!

SILVER SURFER NO.131
J.M. DEMATTEIS/RON GARNEY/BOB WIACEK

SURFER BEGINS HIS QUEST IN EARNEST TO UNCOVER THE TRUE REASONS BEHIND THE LOSS OF HIS EMOTIONS AND TO DISCOVER WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO HIS BELOVED HOMEWORLD, ZENN-LA. BUT WILL HE FIND THE ANSWERS HE'S LOOKING FOR OR ONLY MORE QUESTIONS?

ART FROM CAPTAIN AMERICA

SPIDER-MAN

ON SALE JULY 2

MARVEL TEAM-UP NO.1

STARRING SPIDER-MAN & GENERATION X

TOM PEYER/PAT OLLIFFE/AL WILLIAMSON

CONCEPT: REMEMBER MARVEL TEAM-UP, THE TITLE THAT PAIRED SPIDEY, MARVEL'S QUINTESSENTIAL LONER, WITH A BEVY OF SUPER-POWERED GUEST-STARS? WE DO TOO! THAT'S WHY WE'RE BRINGING IT BACK AS AN ALL-NEW MONTHLY TITLE SET FIRMLY IN THE WORLD OF THE EVER AMAZING SPIDER-MAN! BUT THIS TIME, INSTEAD OF EXISTING AS A STRING OF "FILL-IN" OR "DETACHED" STORIES, MARVEL TEAM-UP WILL FEATURE ONGOING SUB-PLOTS AND WILL REFLECT THE MONTHLY CONTINUITY OF THE CORE SPIDER-MAN TITLES. EACH MONTH, THE WISE-CRACKING, WEB-SLINGING WALL-CRAWLER WILL FACE A MENACE HE CAN'T QUITE HANDLE ON HIS OWN, AND TURN TO MARVEL'S BEST AND BRIGHTEST! WILL THEY GET ALONG? WILL SPIDEY ANNOY THE HECK OUT OF THEM? WILL THEY HAVE A "MISUNDERSTANDING" AND POUND ON EACH OTHER? THAT'S THE FUN OF THIS TITLE, TIGER!

CHARACTERS: IN THE DEBUT ISSUE, THE SHADOWY INFORMATION-BROKER KNOWN AS THE AUTHORITY USES SPIDER-MAN AS HIS STALKING HORSE TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING AN UPCOMING EVENT OF IMPORTANCE. AND WHEN THE EUTHANASIA UNDERGROUND DUMPS 2 MILLION DOLLARS OF POISONED MONEY IN THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE MUTANT KNOWN AS SKIN, IT'S UP TO SPIDEY AND THE NEW MUTANTS OF GENERATION X TO SET THINGS STRAIGHT! LOOK FOR UPCOMING ADVENTURES TO STAR FOLKS LIKE CYCLOPS, HERCULES AND QUICKSILVER!

CREATIVE TEAM: TALK ABOUT A MARVELOUS TEAM-UP! WIZARD TOP 10 WRITER TOM PEYER (LEGION OF SUPER HEROES) UNITES WITH UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN'S PAT OLLIFFE AND AL WILLIAMSON AS THE REGULAR CREATIVE TEAM ON EACH AND EVERY ISSUE!

THE SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN NO.19

TODD DEZAGO/RICHARD CASE/RICHARD CASE

THE RETURN OF THE COSMIC-POWERED MUTANT CALLED THE LIVING MONOLITH! WHEN A FRAGMENT OF THE LIVING MONOLITH FALLS TO EARTH, ITS ESSENCE TRANSFORMS A YOUNG WOMAN INTO SOMETHING SO EVIL, EVEN SPIDEY MAY BE POWERLESS TO STOP HER! PLUS: THE SET-UP IN THE SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN FLASHBACK ISSUE COMES TO FRUITION!

ON SALE JULY 9

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN NO.426

TOM DEFALCO/STEVE SKROCE/BUD LAROSA

HE'S BACK, THE CLASSIC, ONE-AND-ONLY, PORTLY, BOWL-CUT, MALE DOCTOR OCTOPUS! WE HINTED AT IT LAST ISSUE, BUT NOW IT HAPPENS, THE REAL OTTO OCTAVIUS IS IN THE HOUSE!

UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN NO.24

KURT BUSIEK/PAT OLLIFFE/BOB McLEOD

THE FINAL FATE OF BATWING! FURTHER MUTATED BY CURT CONNORS' ATTEMPTS TO RETURN HIM TO HUMAN FORM, BATWING BEGS SPIDEY TO CURE HIM OR KILL HIM! PLUS: FIND OUT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE THE BIG MAN ON CAMPUS AS FLASH THOMPSON NARRATES THIS ISSUE!

ON SALE JULY 16

PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN NO.83

HOWARD MACKIE/JOHN ROMITA JR./SCOTT HANNA

ALL VERTIGO ISSUE! NO, NOT THAT KIND, THE "OH-MY-GOSH-I'M-UP-SO-HIGH-I'M-GOING-TO-DIE" KIND! IT'S SEEMS THAT BITE FROM MORBIUS HAS SPIDEY TRAPPED ON THE SIDE OF A WALL, TERRIFIED TO MOVE! THROW IN SHOC, THE FRIENDS OF HUMANITY AND AN OLD FOE AND YOU KNOW WE'RE IN FOR A REALLY WILD TIME!

ON SALE JULY 23

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN '97

ROGER STERN/TOM LYLE/ROBERT JONES

AN ALL-NEW, 48-PAGE ANNUAL CONTINUING EVENTS FROM UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN '97! AFTER YEARS OF INCARCERATION, SUNDOWN IS BACK ON THE STREETS AND IN THE SIGHTS OF N.Y. CRIMELORDS LIKE TOMBSTONE, FORTUNATO AND THE ROSE! CAN SPIDEY CONVINCE SUNDOWN TO GO STRAIGHT, OR WILL HE GET BURNED WHEN THE HOTSHOT SELLS HIS SERVICES TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER?!

THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN NO.249

J.M. DEMATTEIS/LUKE ROSS/DAN GREEN

THE LAST TEMPTATION OF FLASH THOMPSON! WRITER J.M. DEMATTEIS PENS A VERY SPECIAL TALE AS FLASH, THE FORMER HIGHSCHOOL STUD, CONFRONTS AN OPPONENT TOUGHER THAN ANYTHING HE EVER FACED ON THE FOOTBALL FIELD, HIS DRINKING PROBLEM. CAN BETTY BRANT HELP HIM? AND JUST HOW DO THE EVENTS OF THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN FLASHBACK ISSUE TIE IN?

ON SALE JULY 30

VENOM: SIGN OF THE BOSS NO.1 (OF 2)

IVAN VELEZ JR./TOM DERENICK

VENOM BRAWLS WITH GHOST RIDER IN A TWO-FISTED, TWO-ISSUE LIMITED SERIES! WHEN TERRORISTS SEIZE A BORN-AGAIN SOUTH AMERICAN PRESIDENT IN A BRONX CHURCH, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT SENDS VENOM IN TO KICK BOOTY! UNFORTUNATELY, THE BRONX IS THE HOME TURF OF THAT FLAME-HEADED SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE AND HE THINKS VENOM HAS MORE INNOCENT BLOOD ON HIS HANDS THAN THE TERRORISTS!

THE ESSENTIAL SPIDER-MAN VOLUME 2

STAN LEE/STEVE DITKO

INSPIRED BY THOSE MANGA "PHONEBOOK" STYLE VOLUMES, MARVEL CONTINUES ITS ESSENTIAL SERIES WITH THE COMPANION PIECE TO THE ESSENTIAL SPIDER-MAN. AT A WHOPPING 528 PAGES, THIS BARGAIN-PRICED COLLECTION GATHERS AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #21-43 AND SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #2 & #3 BY THAT TEAM SUPREME, **STAN "THE MAN" LEE** AND **STEVE DITKO**! THIS ONE'S GOT IT ALL: THE HULK, DOCTOR OCTOPUS, THE AVENGERS, THE SCORPION, THE HUMAN TORCH, THE BEETLE, KRAVEN, THE RHINO, MOLTEN MAN, DOCTOR STRANGE, THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF MARY JANE, THE UNMASKING OF THE GREEN GOBLIN AND THAT INSPIRATIONAL SCENE WHERE SPIDEY LIFTS THAT MASSIVE PILE OF MACHINERY OVER HIS HEAD! AND BEST OF ALL, IT'S PRINTED IN GLORIOUS BLACK-AND-WHITE ON GOOD OL' FASHIONED NEWSPRINT!

X-MEN

ON SALE JULY 2

CABLE NO.46

JAMES ROBINSON/RANDY GREEN/SCOTT HANNA

ZERO TOLERANCE

"NO ESCAPE" PART 2 OF 3! CABLE AND CALIBAN ARE TRAPPED INSIDE THE XAVIER INSTITUTE, DESPERATELY TRYING TO HOLD OFF BASTION'S ARMY! HOW CAN THEY EXPEL THE ZERO TOLERANCE FORCES FROM THE GROUNDS OF THE SCHOOL WHEN BASTION KNOWS ALL OF THEIR SECRETS? PLUS: THE FINAL FATE OF CALIBAN?! WITH THIS THREE-PART SAGA, NEW ONGOING WRITER JAMES ROBINSON LAYS THE SEEDS FOR HIS UPCOMING STORYLINES!

MAVERICK NO.1

JORGE GONZALEZ/JIMMY CHEUNG

CONCEPT: CHRISTOPHER NORD WASN'T ALWAYS A LONER. ONCE HE WAS A IDEALISTIC FREEDOM FIGHTER WORKING TO LIBERATE POLITICAL PRISONERS. ONCE HE EVEN HAD A WIFE. PROBLEM WAS, SHE TURNED OUT TO BE A DOUBLE AGENT SENT TO SPY ON HIM. IN A RAGE, HE STRUCK HER DOWN, ONLY TO HAVE HER DYING WORDS CLAIM FINAL REVENGE. SHE HAD JUST DISCOVERED SHE CARRIED HIS UNBORN CHILD. DISILLUSIONED AND BITTER, NORD IMMERSED HIMSELF IN HIS WORK IN ORDER TO COPE WITH HIS CONFLICTING FEELINGS OF GUILT AND BETRAYAL. BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE CIA, NORD WAS RECRUITED INTO TEAM X, A TOP SECRET SQUAD OF OPERATIVES WHICH INCLUDED LOGAN AND VICTOR CREED, THE MUTANTS THE WORLD WOULD COME TO KNOW AS WOLVERINE AND SABRETOOTH. IT TURNED OUT NORTH WAS A MUTANT TOO, ABLE TO ABSORB AND RECHANNEL KINETIC IMPACT. THROW HIM OUT OF A BUILDING, HE'LL CHARGE HIS FIST AND SHATTER YOUR FACE. AFTER THE TEAM DISBANDED, NORD CHANGED HIS NAME TO DAVID NORTH, BECAME A MERCENARY FOR HIRE AND ADOPTED THE MONIKER MAVERICK. SINCE THEN, NORTH HAS SPECIALIZED IN THE DIRTY JOBS NO ELSE WANTS TO DO YET DESPERATELY NEED DOING. A LIFE ON HIS OWN TERMS WOULD BE FINE FOR MAVERICK, BUT FATE HAS DENIED HIM EVEN THAT. WHAT HE HAS BEEN GIVEN IS THE LEGACY VIRUS, THE DEADLY PLAGUE THAT HAS RAVAGED THE MUTANT POPULATION. NOW MAVERICK DOESN'T KNOW WHAT WILL KILL HIM FIRST: HIS MANY ENEMIES OR HIS OWN BODY.

THE UNCANNY X-MEN NO.347

SCOTT LOBDELL/JOE MADUREIRA/TIM TOWNSEND

ZERO TOLERANCE

THE X-MEN-LOST IN SPACE?! THROWN THROUGH THE DAMAGED STARGATE ON THEIR JOURNEY BACK TO EARTH, OUR HEROES FIND THEMSELVES ON A SIMULTANEOUSLY FUTURISTIC AND ANCIENT WORLD, CONFRONTED BY AN OLD ENEMY! MEANWHILE, WHO IS MAGGOT, AND WHY IS HE SEARCHING FOR JOSEPH, THE MUTANT FORMERLY KNOWN AS MAGNETO?

ON SALE JULY 9

ALPHA FLIGHT NO.2

STEVEN T. SEAGLE/SCOTT CLARK/CHRIS CARLSON

MYSTERIES ABOUND IN THIS SPECTACULAR SECOND ISSUE! VINDICATOR DISCOVERS THAT THERE'S SOMETHING MORE SINISTER WITH DEPARTMENT H THAN THE AGENCY IS DISCLOSING, INCLUDING THE MANIPULATION OF ALPHA FLIGHT INTO FURTHER EXTREMES. PLUS: PUCK DECIDES TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF SASQUATCH'S BIZARRE TRANSFORMATION. ALL THIS AND A BATTLE WITH A DEADLY ENEMY FROM THE PAST!

ALPHA FLIGHT NO.2
VARIANT COVER BY SCOTT CLARK & CHRIS CARLSON
STEVEN T. SEAGLE/SCOTT CLARK/CHRIS CARLSON
CONTINUING MARVEL'S "2-FOR-2" PROGRAM WITH A VARIANT COVER!

DAYDREAMERS NO.2 (OF 3)
J.M. DEMATTEIS/MARTIN EGELAND/HOWARD SHUM
THE TIME-TRIPPING, SPACE-SPANNING ADVENTURES OF OUR GENERATION X-PATRIATES CONTINUE! ARTIE, LEECH, TANA NILE, HOWARD THE DUCK AND MAN-THING DISCOVER SOME OF THE WEIRDEST WORLDS EVER AS THEY RUN FROM THE DIMENSION-HOPPING DARK HUNTER! WHO IS THIS MYSTERIOUS BEING? WHAT IS TANA NILE'S TRUE AGENDA? FOR THAT MATTER, WHY THE BLAZES IS MAN-THING SPEAKING? MAYBE THE TRUTH IS IN HERE!

GENERATION X NO.30
JAMES ROBINSON/CHRIS BACHALO
CONTINUING GUEST-WRITER JAMES ROBINSON'S (LEAVE IT TO CHANCE) FOUR-ISSUE RUN! HUNTED THROUGH THE SEWERS OF LOS ANGELES, THE GEN X KIDS MUST MAKE A LAST STAND AGAINST THE FORCES OF ZERO TOLERANCE! PLUS: WILL THE WHITE QUEEN AND BANSHEE STRIKE A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL AND ACCEPT AN OFFER OF AID FROM EMPLATE?! (NOTE: GENERATION X ALSO APPEARS IN MARVEL TEAM-UP #1.)

X-FACTOR NO.137
HOWARD MACKIE/JEFF MATSUDA/ART THIBERT
THE FINAL FATE OF SHARD AND POLARIS! CAN X-FACTOR RECOVER FROM THE DECIMATION INFLICTED ON THEM BY SABRETOOTH? OLD ALLIES, NEW OPPONENTS, THE BROTHERHOOD, THE HOUNDS, ALL WILL PLAY A PIVOTAL ROLE IN THE NEW X-FACTOR!

ON SALE JULY 16
THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF CYCLOPS AND PHOENIX
TRADE PAPERBACK
NEW COVER BY JOHN PAUL LEON
PETER MILLIGAN/JOHN PAUL LEON
RE-PRESENTING THE STORY THAT REVEALED THE EPIC ORIGIN OF THE MAN CALLED SINISTER! HURLED 150 YEARS INTO THE PAST, CYCLOPS AND PHOENIX ENCOUNTER NATHANIEL ESSEX, THE BRILLIANT GENETICIST WHO THEY KNOW IS DESTINED TO BECOME MR. SINISTER! CAN THEY SAVE HIS SOUL AND DEFEAT THE NEWLY-RISEN APOCALYPSE? THIS 112-PAGE COLLECTION FEATURES A NEW COVER AND NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN SKETCHES BY JOHN PAUL LEON!

EXCALIBUR NO.112
BEN RAAB/PETE WOODS/SCOTT KOBLISH
A TIE-IN TO NEXT MONTH'S DEBUT OF THE QUICKSILVER ONGOING SERIES! NIGHTCRAWLER AND PETE WISDOM JAUNT TO GERMANY TO TRACK DOWN AMANDA SEFTON WHILE COLOSSUS AND MEGGAN GET STUCK IN NO-MAN'S LAND.

PSYLOCKE & ANGEL: CRIMSON DAWN NO.2 (OF 4)
BEN RAAB/SALVADOR LARROCA/ART THIBERT
BETSY BRADDOCK AND WARREN WORTHINGTON, THE LETHAL LOVERS KNOWN AS PSYLOCKE AND ARCHANGEL, REACH A CRUCIAL POINT IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP. TOO BAD OBSIDEON PICKS THIS MOMENT TO STRIKE! STREAKING OUT OF UNCANNY X-MEN CONTINUITY, THIS LIMITED SERIES PROMISES TO CONCRETELY CHANGE PSYLOCKE AND ARCHANGEL!

STRONG GUY REBORN
TODD DEZAGO/ANDY SMITH/ART THIBERT
STRAIGHT FROM THE PAGES OF X-FACTOR! STRONG GUY'S OUT OF HIS COMA, SOUNDS LIKE IT'S TIME TO TEAM UP WITH HIS OL' PAL LILA CHENEY TO GO ON A RIP-SNORTING, GALAXY-SPANNING ADVENTURE! WHY, YOU ASK? WELL, TO SAVE THE UNIVERSE FROM WARRING ALIEN RACES, OF COURSE! PLUS: PUZZLES, GAMES, AND TONS OF GOOFY STUFF YOU CAN USE TO REPLACE ALL OF THAT JUNK YOU LEARNED IN SCHOOL!

X-MEN

WHAT IF? NO.100
STARRING GAMBIT & ROGUE
IVAN VELEZ JR./KLAUS JANSON/KLAUS JANSON
CONCEPT: WHAT IF WHAT IF HIT NUMBER 100? FIND OUT HERE! GAMBIT, THE X-MEN'S INFORMATION THIEF, HAS UNCOVERED THE GREATEST SECRET OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE A SECRET THAT COULD DESTROY EVERYONE! IT'S UP TO GAMBIT'S EX-LOVER, THE BATTLIN' BELLE KNOWN AS ROGUE, TO STOP HIM FROM REVEALING THE HIDDEN TRUTH TO THE FIEND KNOWN AS MR. SINISTER! PLUS: ON AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT NOTE, WE PRESENT A WHIMSICAL BACK-UP STORY THAT SENDS THE FANTASTIC FOUR TO THE LAND OF OZ!

X-MAN NO.30
TERRY KAVANAGH/ROGER CRUZ/BUD LAROSA
HAS NATE GREY FINALLY GOT HIS LIFE IN ORDER? HE'S DENOUNCED THE X-MEN, LEFT BEHIND THRENODY, BROKE AWAY FROM THE BROTHERHOOD AND STANDS ALONE, OR DOES HE? JUST WHO ARE THE THREE MYSTERIOUS GIRLS THAT HAVE LATCHED ONTO HIM AND WHAT EXACTLY DO THEY INTEND TO DO WITH NATE?

X-MEN NO.67
SCOTT LOBDELL/CARLOS PACHECO/ART THIBERT
ZERO TOLERANCE
AS ICEMAN AND THE MUTANT NAMED CECILIA REYES EVADE THE NEWLY-ENHANCED PRIME SENTINELS, A MYSTERIOUS ISRAELI MOSSAD AGENT FLEES HER OWN COUNTRY IN AN EFFORT TO DELIVER INFORMATION THAT COULD DESTROY BASTION AND OPERATION: ZERO TOLERANCE!

ON SALE JULY 23

WOLVERINE NO.116
LARRY HAMA/LEINEL FRANCIS YU
ZERO TOLERANCE
AFTER ESCAPING BASTION'S CONVERTED HULKBUSTER BASE, WOLVERINE, CYCLOPS, PHOENIX, CANNONBALL AND STORM FIND THEMSELVES STRANDED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NEW MEXICO DESERT! THAT IS, UNTIL THEY COME UPON A QUIET LITTLE TOWN. THE QUESTION IS, ARE THE STRANGE BEINGS THAT POPULATE IT FRIEND OR FOE? **(NOTE: IN JUNE AND JULY, THE FIVE CORE MEMBERS OF X-MEN (LOGAN, STORM, CANNONBALL, CYCLOPS & JEAN GREY) WILL ONLY APPEAR IN WOLVERINE!)**

X-FORCE NO.69
JOHN FRANCIS MOORE/ADAM POLLINA/MARK MORALES
HAS DOMINO'S LUCK FINALLY RUN OUT? IN THE AFTERMATH OF ZERO TOLERANCE, THE TEAM IS LEFT WITH MAJOR PROBLEMS: THEIR LEADER (WHOSE PROBABILITY-ALTERING POWERS ARE FAILING) HAS BEEN KIDNAPPED, WARPATH IS OFF FULFILLING A DEVILISH DEAL WITH THE MYSTERIOUS SLEDGE, AND, TO TOP IT ALL OFF, THEY'VE REALIZED THEY NO LONGER BELONG WITH THE OTHER X-TEAMS AT THE XAVIER INSTITUTE!

ON SALE JULY 30

GAMBIT NO.1 (OF 4)
HOWARD MACKIE/KLAUS JANSON/KLAUS JANSON
CONCEPT: WHEN IT COMES TO GAMBIT'S PAST, WE'VE ONLY SCRATCHED THE SURFACE! THAT CHANGES HERE, WITH A GAMBIT ADVENTURE UNLIKE ANY BEFORE. THIS IS NOT YOUR BASIC "REMY GOES DOWN TO NEW ORLEANS WITH ROGUE AND FIGHTS WITH THE THIEVES GUILD" STORY. NO X-MEN TO BACK HIM UP. NO FAMILIAR BIG EASY STREETS. NO "I LOVE YOU, MON CHERE, BUT I CANNOT TOUCH YOU" EXCUSES. THIS IS GAMBIT ON HIS OWN IN UNEXPLORED TERRITORY. THIS TIME, THE X-MEN'S WILD CARD FINDS HIMSELF IN MIAMI, A PLACE OF DECADENCE, DRUGS AND DARKNESS. A DARKNESS IN WHICH GAMBIT FEELS QUITE AT HOME. A DARKNESS THAT MADE HIM WHAT HE IS TODAY. BUT WHEN GAMBIT FINDS HIMSELF SELLING HIS SERVICES TO THE CUBAN UNDERWORLD, HE FINDS HIMSELF DRAWN DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THAT DARKNESS, AND WHEN THIS WILD RIDE'S OVER, HE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO WALK BACK INTO THE LIGHT.

X-MEN UNLIMITED NO.16
BEN RAAB/MELVIN RUBI
STARRING BANSHEE AND THE WHITE QUEEN! SEAN CASSIDY AND EMMA FROST, GENERATION X'S ANSWER TO MOONLIGHTING, LOCK HORNS OVER WHETHER TO RECRUIT HUMANS INTO THE SCHOOL'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM. BUT WITH BASTION PULLING THE STRINGS, THAT MAY NOT BE A DECISION THEY HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE! SPECIAL BONUS: THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE NEW MUTANT, PRIMAL!

ART FROM X-MEN

MEDIA

ON SALE JUNE 2

MEN IN BLACK NO.1

LOWELL CUNNINGHAM/DIETRICH SMITH/PHIL MOY & ART NICHOLS

A PREQUEL TO THIS JULY'S BLOCKBUSTER! THIS 48-PAGE ONE-SHOT FEATURES AN OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD ADVENTURE THAT PRECEDES THIS SUMMER'S ANSWER TO *INDEPENDENCE DAY*, COLUMBIA PICTURE'S *MEN IN BLACK*! WRITTEN BY THE MAN WHO CREATED THE MEN IN BLACK, LOWELL CUNNINGHAM!

ON SALE JULY 2

CASPER AND FRIENDS NO.3

SID JACOBSON/ANGELO DECESARE/BILL WHITE

THE "FRIENDLY GHOST" RETURNS FOR FUN IN THE SUN! CASPER AND THE GHOSTLY TRIO TAKE TO THE HIGH SEAS IN A BOO-CANEER ADVENTURE! WITH A "TREASURE OF THE DEEP" BOARD GAME AND THE HARVEY HEROES OFF TO CAMP, THIS 64-PAGE MAGAZINE-SIZED SPECIAL IS PACKED WITH SUMER SURPRISES!

MEN IN BLACK: THE MOVIE

LOWELL CUNNINGHAM/TBD/PHIL MOY

THE OFFICIAL ADAPTATION OF THIS SUMMER'S BLOCKBUSTER! ARE YOUR NEXT DOOR NEIGHBORS ALIENS? TIME TO CALL IN THE MEN IN BLACK! THIS 48-PAGE ONE-SHOT CAPTURES ALL THE LAUGHS AND THRILLS OF COLUMBIA PICTURES' SCI-FI COMEDY, STARRING WILL SMITH AND TOMMY LEE JONES!

STAR TREK®: VOYAGER™ NO.9

DAN ABNETT & IAN EDGINTON/TERRY PALLOT/AL MILGROM

ON A DESPERATE RESCUE MISSION, THE U.S.S. VOYAGER™ AND HER CREW BECOME TRAPPED AS VICTIMS THEMSELVES! AND IF THAT WASN'T ENOUGH, THERE ARE PIRATES OFF THE STARBORD! WITH ALL OF THE VOYAGER'S SYSTEMS RENDERED INOPERABLE, IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S TIME FOR SOME GOOD OLD FASHIONED HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT! *(NOTE: THIS IS A RE-SOLICITATION FOR STAR TREK: VOYAGER #9. ALL PREVIOUS ORDERS FOR STAR TREK: VOYAGER #9 AND #10 HAVE BEEN CANCELED.)*

ON SALE JULY 9

DOCTOR WHO NO.254

THE OFFICIAL, FULL-COLOR PHOTO MAGAZINE FEATURING INTERVIEWS, ARTICLES AND COMICS CELEBRATING THE MANY LIVES OF THE LEGENDARY DOCTOR WHO!

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE® NO.11

HOWARD WEINSTEIN/TOM GRINDBERG/BOB ALMOND

STILL STUCK IN THE HOLODECK RE-CREATION OF AN ALIEN SPACE STATION'S LAST MOMENTS, SISKO AND A CRITICALLY WOUNDED DAX'S ONLY CHANCE IS ODO, TROUBLE IS, HE'S ON THE OUTSIDE AND DOESN'T KNOW IF HE'S TOO LATE!

ON SALE JULY 16

STAR TREK®: STARFLEET ACADEMY™ NO.10

CHRIS COOPER/CHRIS RENAUD/ANDY LANNING

THE CADETS, AIDED BY CAPTAIN PIKE, CONTINUE TO BATTLE THE FEARSOME JEM'HADAR ON THE SURFACE OF TALOS IV. THEIR ONE CHANCE FOR VICTORY IS TO BLOW UP THE HEAVILY GUARDED STOCKPILE OF "WHITE", THE JEM'HADAR'S ENERGY- GIVING DRUG. BUT WHO CAN PULL OFF THIS IMPOSSIBLE MISSION?!

ON SALE JULY 23

STAR TREK®: UNLIMITED NO.5

DAN ABNETT & IAN EDGINTON/TOM MORGAN & RON RANDALL/KEV SUTHERLAND/AL WILLIAMSON & ART NICHOLS

IT'S ANOTHER 48-PAGE ISSUE FEATURING TWO SEPARATE AND COMPLETE TALES STARRING THE CREWS OF THE ORIGINAL SERIES AND *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*! FIRST, THE WORST NIGHTMARES OF RIKER, TROI, WORF AND CRUSHER COME TRUE ON A DEATH-RIDDEN SPACE STATION! THEN, CAPTAIN KIRK AND CREW FIND THEMSELVES STRANDED ON A HOSTILE WORLD, CAUGHT UP IN AN ALIEN EXPERIMENT THAT'S BEEN RUNNING FOR THE LAST 5,000 YEARS! *(NOTE: THIS IS A RE-SOLICITATION FOR STAR TREK: UNLIMITED #5. ALL PREVIOUS ORDERS FOR STAR TREK: UNLIMITED #5 HAVE BEEN CANCELED.)*

ON SALE JULY 30

STAR TREK®: EARLY VOYAGES™ NO.8

DAN ABNETT & IAN EDGINTON/PATRICK ZIRCHER/GREG ADAMS

DR. BOYCE IS SENT TO NEYDA PRIME TO HELP FIGHT A VIRAL INFECTION THAT'S RAPIDLY KILLING OFF THE PLANET'S POPULATION AND SO IS DR. BOYCE! OKAY, HE JUST KILLS ONE GUY, BUT IT'S A VERY IMPORTANT GUY! BONES NEVER DID ANYTHING LIKE THIS!

MARVEL STUFF

WILDSTORM FINE ARTS

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THIS LIMITED EDITION, 15" X 20" IRIS PRINT FEATURES ALL-NEW, ORIGINAL ARTWORK OF THE X-MEN BY ARTIST **ADAM HUGHES!** PRINTED ON ARCHES WATER COLOR PAPER AND SIGNED BY ADAM, THIS PRINT IS LIMITED TOO 300 SIGNED AND NUMBERED COPIES.

FOR COMPLETE ORDERING INFORMATION, PLEASE SEE PREVIEWS VOL. VII, NO.4

LEGENDS IN 3 DIMENSIONS

GREEN GOBLIN BUST

PETER PARKER'S CAMERA COULDN'T HAVE CAPTURED NORMAN OSBORN'S EVIL STREAK AS TRUE-TO-LIFE AS SCULPTOR GREG ARONOWITZ'S IINTERPRETATION OF THE GREEN GOBLIN! THE WEB-SLINGER'S NEMESIS IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF "GOOD VS. BAD" BUSTS FEATURING MARVEL'S MOST FAMOUS HEROES AND TREACHEROUS VILLAINS.

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- LIVE LONG AND PROSPER- AN INSIDE LOOK AT MARVEL'S STAR TREK COMICS
- RON GARNEY HANGS TEN WITH THE SILVER SURFER
- THE NEW MAVERICK SERIES
- SPIDER-MAN COMIC STRIP ARTIST LARRY LIEBER
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- CAPTAIN AMERICA'S SILLIEST MOMENT
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Stan Lee Presents

Marvel Vision #19

FLASHBACK SPECIAL

July 1997

Timothy Tuohy
I'm not as old as people say

Julio Soto
Is just a kid

Brent Ferguson
Really needs to pick one hair color a week

Polly Watson
Writes like she's old

Susan Raso
Tells people she's not old but mature

Suzanne Paquin
Looks eternally 21

John Stack
Drives like a 16-year-old

Bob Harras
Has young triplets

Jim (Ski) Sokolowski
Is really old

Shirrel Rhoades
Thinks black clothes make him look younger

David J. Schreff
Wishes Tim would get on with it

Scott Sassa
Thinks Tim is brain damaged

I remember my first Marvel Comic like it was yesterday. No, this isn't a self-appreciating installment of Marvel Memories; it is, however, my contribution to Flashbacks month.

As was the case with many of today's creators, I got comics when I was sick. My father would go to the newsstand on his way home from working those long hours that fathers work. When he knew I was sick and didn't make it to school he would get me some comics to make my convalescence go quicker.

Sure, there were some DC's in that batch but they don't stir the memories that AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #107 does. The cover of a strung-up Spider-Man was shocking. The Spider-Slayer with Alistair Smythe in control really stayed in my mind. I've still got that book. It's stored in a box up in my uncle Dennis's attic.

What brought up this commentary? Flashbacks.

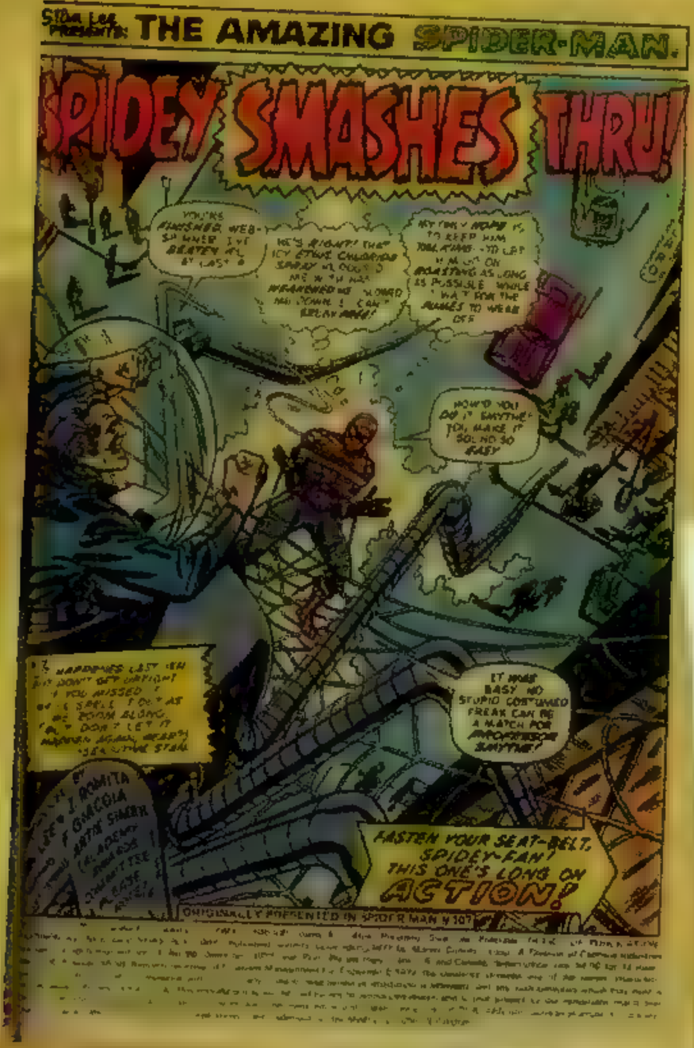
It's a concept that I believe is necessary in today's environment of comic overkill. Flashbacks will present simpler stories, with simpler page layouts and simpler coloring.

Is this a slam at today's comics? No, by any means. What it is, however, is a moment for we readers to reflect upon simpler times, easier times. Times without three to four dangling subplots. Bleed pages bleeding all over the place and airbrushed colors out the ying-yang.

I really hope you enjoy the books that Marvel will present in this format. I know I will.

I'm done.

Tim Tuohy



My first comic.

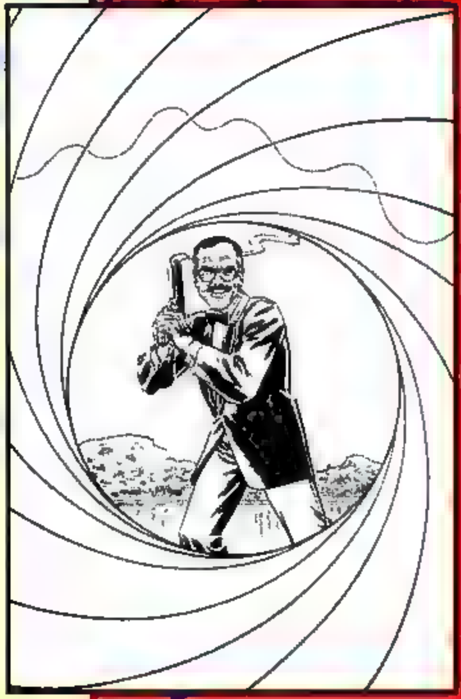
Me as a kid thinking:
I hope that's a carrot!

FLASHBACK

HEROES UNBORN!

May is a dry month, right? Sure, it's springtime and the birds are chirping and the bees are buzzing and the sun is shining and all the flowers are in bloom and all that junk...but so what? Where's the excitement? The action? You've spent all winter looking forward to spring, and now it's here, so *that's* shot. There are no holidays, except May Day, which no one really knows what it's for or celebrates anyway, and Memorial Day, which isn't exactly one of those jump-up-and-down holidays. Heck, when you look at it that way, even February packs more of a punch!

But it doesn't have to be that way any more, True Believer! Marvel has officially declared the merry month of May: Flashbacks Month! That's right, twenty-seven of Marvel's best 'n' brightest books, scheduled to hit the stands between May 7 and May 28, will feature the look, the style, and the snappy dialogue that made the comics of the 1960s the treasures that they still are today! And each issue will feature a never-before-told story from that era! For example, the INCREDIBLE HULK issue finally reveals the truth about the mysterious circumstances surrounding the death of Bruce Banner's father! The story of the birth of Magneto will unfold in the pages of X-MEN, and you'll witness the first meeting of Banshee (a.k.a. Sean Cassidy) and Emma Frost up close 'n' personal in the hottest issue of GENERATION X yet!



The concept for Flashbacks was the brainchild of X-MEN writer Scott Lobdell. Initially planned only for X-MEN books, Scott's idea spawned a whole lot of talk among writers, artists and editors about how cool comics looked when they first started reading them, and about the elements that attracted them to comics in the first place. Solid, character-driven stories, easy-to-follow art, and the thrill of a whole new universe unfolding right before your eyes came to define the "Marvel Way" in the early years! Everyone agreed that it would be a real blast to try and emulate the styles of yesteryear, with the added bonus of getting to go back and detail never-before-seen landmark events in the lives of our favorite characters! "We wanted to tell really cool stories that went back before the characters' origins," explains editor in chief Bouncin' Bob Harras. "We wanted to show that these characters were always interesting, even before they became super heroes! "

The only way this concept could get any better, we decided, was to let the true heroes — our readers — in on the fun! Many of the stories presented in the Flashbacks issues are ones that readers have been clamoring for in letters pages, phone calls and faxes for the last thirty years!

For you, True Believers, who were but a twinkle in your parents' eyes when the very first issue of X-MEN hit the stands, this is your chance to see the Marvel Universe the way your heroes saw it when they were but wide-eyed babes in the woods! If you're a Marvel Maniac who's old enough to remember the launch of the FANTASTIC FOUR, you'll thrill to the sight of your most beloved heroes and your most reviled villains

meeting each other for the first time! Never read CABLE? Love DAREDEVIL but never picked up ELEKTRA? This is your chance to check out the basic premise behind each character and see if there's something there that interests you! Yes, loyal reader, whether you're eight or eighty, we guarantee you'll get a colossal kick out of seeing Peter Parker's parents working as undercover agents in exotic overseas locales! And whether you're seven or seventy, we know you can't wait to witness the Silver Surfer's very first contact with the human race that he came to envy!

Nuff said? Hardly! Let us detail the pleasures that await you at the comic shop in just a few short weeks! The fun begins right up front with the covers! Except for a few specials, the books will all be numbered Minus 1, rather than following their traditional numbering for the month, and will be easily identifiable by the image of our fearless leader, Smilin' Stan Lee, in the corner box! Look for the logos of yesteryear to grace the covers of books like CAPTAIN AMERICA , DAREDEVIL and X-MEN. Books like ELEKTRA and VENOM, which didn't exist thirty-some years ago, will sport new "old-style logos" designed just for the occasion!

If you can get your blistered fingers past the cover, you'll find the insides a-sparkle with the special look that made Stan Lee and Jack Kirby schoolyard bywords over three decades ago! No bleed pages, no fancy coloring, none of that stuff we've all come to expect as the norm in comics today. Instead, you'll see six-panel pages in the old non-bleed format, and the flat coloring that recalls the days when Thor was dating Jane Foster and the Silver Surfer was the herald of Galactus! Many of the books

will feature the dot-riddled line-screen look that was standard in the comic industry at the time. And every book features a splash page introduction by Stan the Man himself!

As you can see, there isn't anything we won't do to give these books the most authentic sixties feel possible so that you, the reader, can get the full blast from the past! That's right, Marvel Maniacs, the buck doesn't stop there! Letters pages have been pasted down on the original boards, which we forced our art returns guy, Wilson Ramos, to dig up from the depths of the firetrap of a closet he calls his office! Bullpen Bulletins are back featuring Stan's Soapbox, letters from readers, and the latest inductees into the Mighty Marvel Marching Society! Plus, extras ranging from Elektra's "latest" wardrobe to a "Li'l Petey Parker" back-up story in the pages of UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN!

But here we are, rattling on and on! Tooting our own trumpets! Honking our own horns, shaking our own trees, and just generally flapping our yaps! Don't just take our word for it — get the dirt straight from the horses' mouths! "At first, I was kind of disappointed," says INCREDIBLE HULK penciler Amiable Adam Kubert. "I'd just done my first issue of the book, and I wasn't looking forward to drawing a whole issue of HULK without the Hulk in it! But then I got Peter [David's] plot, and I was pleasantly surprised! Since then, for me, this issue of Flashbacks has changed my approach to drawing! I'm doing the

four-panel grid as consistently as I can. Working in that format forces you to concentrate on what's going on inside the panel, rather than on the shapes of the panels themselves. That's critical in that it forces you to tell the story clearly! You have to make sure that what you do doesn't become repetitive or boring. The story really dictates my approach to drawing, and this story was a great way to approach the Flashback idea."

WOLVERINE writer Leapin' Larry Hama also enjoyed doing a Flashbacks issue, but for different reasons. "One of the problems I always had with Wolverine was that there were always so many discrepancies, so many loose ends," says Larry, who teamed up with penciler Cary Nord to bring you a tale of Wolvie's first run-in with S.H.I.E.L.D.'s Nick Fury. "It's neat to be able to play with these characters and tie up some of this stuff. Readers will be able to find out where Wolverine got the hat, the cigar, and the name 'Canucklehead!' They'll also discover the source of his mantra, 'I'm the best there is at what I do!' "

"Everyone seems to be pretty excited to be working on this," concedes Boyish Bob Harras. "We're even doing an early issue with the THUNDERBOLTS which no one thought we could do — and we can! These are 22-page stories, told simply and cleanly with a more innocent feeling. That's a pretty big challenge, but it turned out to be one we had a lot of fun with!"

Now it's *your* turn to have the fun, True Believer! Remember to look for the Stan Lee "corner-box of approval" on each and every Flashbacks issue — it's your guarantee of a phenomenally fabulous Flashback tale! Now *that's* 'nuff said!

—Polly Watson

ALPHA FLIGHT: IN THE BEGINNING

(Steve Seagle/Anthony Winn)

This crucial issue takes place during the formation of Canada's hottest team of super heroes! Working under the auspices of Canada's equivalent of the CIA, engineer James Hudson struggles to complete the fabled Weapon Alpha...but a dark force is rising against him (no, it isn't Darth Vader)!

DAREDEVIL MINUS 1

(Joe Kelly/Gene Colan)

Matt Murdock's prizefighter dad steps out of the ring to accompany his son to college...and makes an unexpected discovery — one that's even more fearsome and exciting than the concept of coed dorms!

AVENGERS MINUS 1

(Jeph Loeb/Rob Liefeld/Ian Churchill)

Before Captain America caught up with them, the Avengers were a rowdy bunch! Check out this tale of high adventure featuring Scarlet Witch, Hellcat, the Swordsman and Hawkeye!

GHOST RIDER MINUS 1

(Ivan Velez Jr./Javier Saltares)

Meet the mother of the Spirits of Vengeance! No kidding, Dan Ketch and Johnny Blaze's mom turns out to have been a real SOV herself!

JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY MINUS 1

(Tom DeFalco/Ed Benes)

All-father Odin (also known as Thor's dad) goes sword-to-serpent against Seth, the serpent-god of death for the very first time! Starring the likes of Sif, Balder, Jane Foster...and a pre-Thor Donald Blake!

KA-ZAR: SIBLING RIVALRY

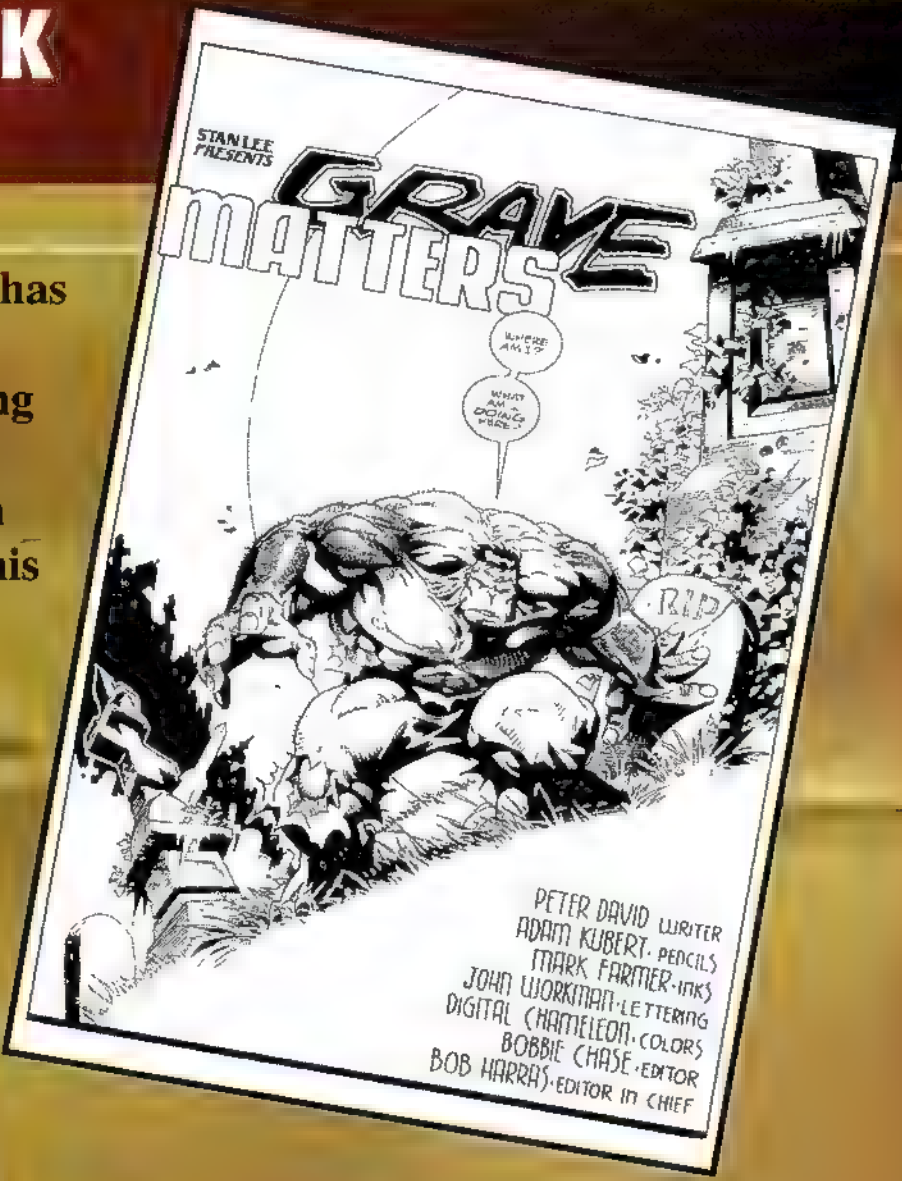
(Mark Waid/Todd DeZago/John Cassidy)

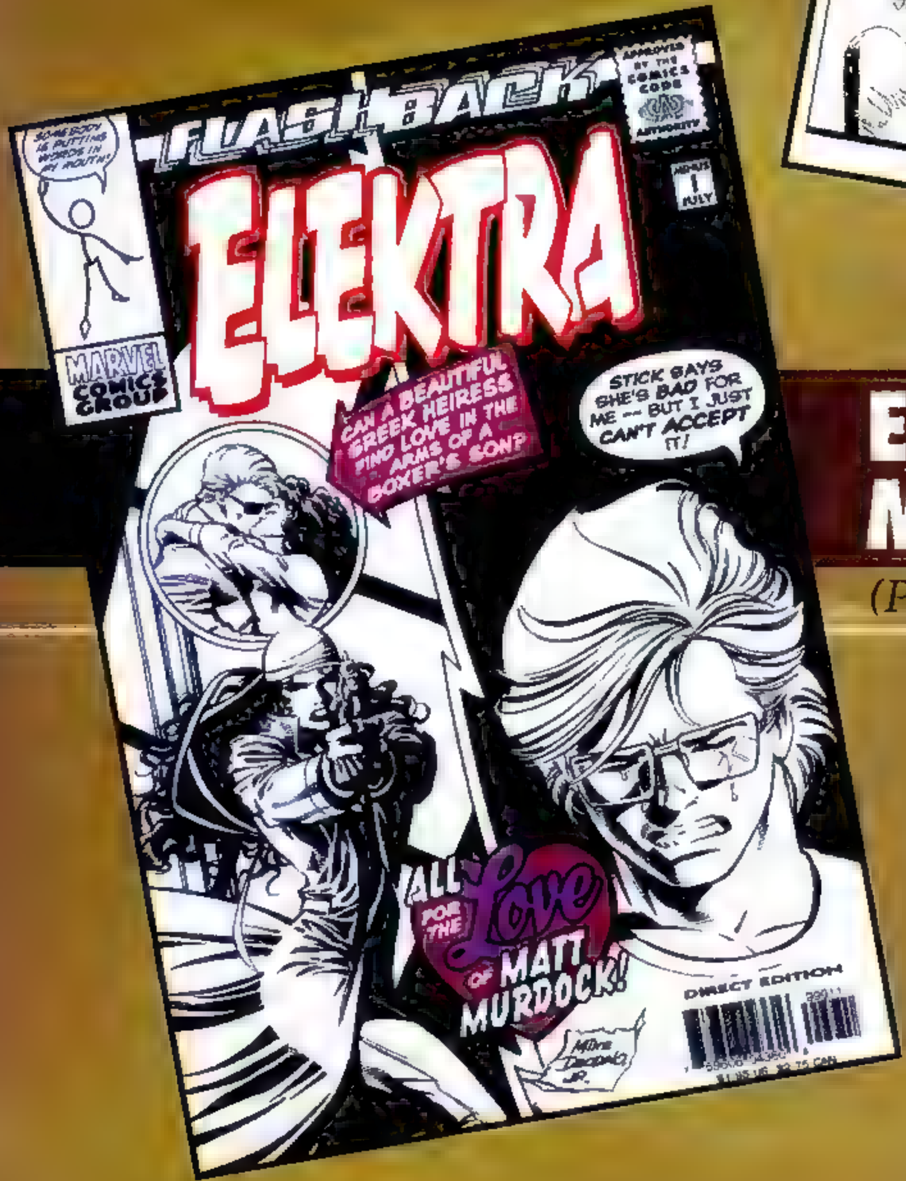
In case you didn't know it, Kevin Plunder (aka Ka-Zar) has a no-good little brother! Get the lowdown on their relationship while taking the high road through Ka-Zar's early jungle years!

INCREDIBLE HULK MINUS 1

(Peter David/Adam Kubert)

Maybe the reason the Hulk has been so crabby lately is because he's finally admitting to himself that he killed his dad! Don't miss "The Death of Brian Banner," coming this May to a tombstone near you!





ELEKTRA MINUS 1

(Peter Milligan/Mike Deodato Jr.)

Rich 'n' gorgeous college student Elektra Natchios locks lips with Matt Murdock...and then locks sais with her future mentor, Stick, for the very first time! Not an issue for the faint of heart!

SILVER SURFER MINUS 1

(J.M. DeMatteis/Ron Garney)

Special "First Contact" issue! The shiny one mingles with mankind for the first time ever...spawning the chain of events that will result in his defection from the shadow of Galactus, the World-Eater!

THUNDERBOLTS: DISTANT RUMBLINGS

(Kurt Busiek/Steve Epting)

Special issue detailing awesome early scenes in the life of the man who became Citizen V! A tyrannical dad, the barbarous Baron Zemo, and the meddlings of Hydra all helped make him the "hero" he is today!

THE SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN MINUS 1

(Tom DeFalco/Joe Bennett)

All's well in lovely Forest Hills, NY, where Peter Parker is living with his Uncle Ben and Aunt May...until the Kingpin opens up shop! Phil Sheldon and the original Rose are on hand!

UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN MINUS 1

(Roger Stern/John Romita Sr.)

Might as well be titled "PETER PARKER'S PARENTS: AGENTS OF S.H.I.E.L.D.!" Richard and Mary Parker fight their way from the posh Riviera to the crowded streets of Bombay in an attempt to save a fellow agent from his doom!

PETER PARKER: SPIDER-MAN MINUS 1

(Howard Mackie/John Romita, Jr.)

Evil corporate mogul Norman Osborn — later revealed as the Green Goblin — takes it on the lam, with agents George and Arthur Stacy hot on his heels!

VENOM: SEED OF DARKNESS

(Len Kaminski/James Fry)

Hardest-working reporter in the news-biz, Eddie Brock tracks a mysterious alien being, hoping to get a front-page scoop! But will the government beat him to the punch?

THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN MINUS 1

(J.M. DeMatteis/Luke Ross)

Find out who and what made Flash Thompson the annoying teenager he is today! Was he always the neighborhood bully...or did he have a little competition at home?

CABLE MINUS 1

(James Robinson/Jose Ladronn)

Don't miss the action as Cable sets foot in the twentieth century — and on Muir Island — for the first time!

THE UNCANNY X-MEN MINUS 1

(Scott Lobdell/Joe Madureira)

Even before the X-Men had formed, there was the Sentinel Program — a program created by the government with the ultimate goal of protecting man from mutant! Now, a mysterious and evil persona from the future has plans to take this terrifying project even further!

EXCALIBUR MINUS 1

(Ben Raab/Rob Haynes)

Three rings of fun, flirting, and fabulous adventure! Join Nightcrawler, Margali and Amanda Sefton for their action-packed, romance-filled salad days with a nomadic circus!

GENERATION X MINUS 1

(James Robinson/Chris Bachalo)

Sparks fly at the very first meeting of Banshee — then a NYC cop named Sean Cassidy — and young Emma Frost! Learn which secret of Banshee's the White Queen still carries with her today!

X-FACTOR MINUS 1

(Howard Mackie/Jeff Matsuda)

Rocket back in time to witness the first manifestation of Havok's powers! But let us warn you now — it ain't gonna be pretty!

WHAT IF? MINUS 1

(Ben Raab/Ariel Olivetti)

What if Bishop traveled back in time...and landed three years before the X-Men were formed? Would the effect this would have on the future of mutantkind be dazzling, dramatic...or disastrous?

X-MAN MINUS 1

(Terry Kavanagh/Roger Cruz)

Re-enter the Age of Apocalypse and check out the untold tales behind the origin of Nate Grey! Find out what role Scott Summers, Jean Grey and Mr. Sinister play in his creation! More disturbing than the reality that is sheep-cloning!

X-MEN MINUS 1

(Scott Lobdell/Carlos Pacheco)

The death of a beautiful friendship — and the birth of Magneto! Once the best friend of young Charles Xavier, Erik Magnus Lensherr is about to become his most deadly enemy!

DEADPOOL MINUS 1

(Joe Kelly/Aaron Lopresti)

Before Deadpool became a highly-paid assassin, he was just a complete lunatic on the fringe! And that's exactly what Landau, Luckman and Lake were looking for!

WOLVERINE MINUS 1

(Larry Hama/Cary Nord)

Weapon X Wolvie and his pal James Hudson go adamantium-to-eyepatch with Nick Fury – who's just getting into the espionage biz!

X-FORCE MINUS 1

(John Francis Moore/Adam Pollina)

Before there was X-Force, there was Warpath's big brother, John Proudstar — the man who would become mutantkind's first martyr! Wonder what kind of job application form he had to fill out to get that one?

FLASHBACK